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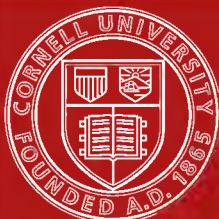
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NORWEGIAN
LIFE AND LITERATURE
ENGLISH ACCOUNTS AND VIEWS
ESPECIALLY IN THE 19TH CENTURY

BY
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P R E F A C E

THE purpose of this inquiry has been to trace the development in England of an interest in Norwegian matters down to the end of last century.

This interest had two aspects, one bearing on the country and its population, and another dealing with its literature, literature here meant in the sense of belles-lettres, poetry, and drama. Scientific literature, being of a more international character, has found no place in the account. Thus English references to Norwegian historians, to men like P. A. Munch and Sophus Bugge, cannot, I take it, be considered a sign of a general English familiarity with Norwegian culture, as they are only to be met with in cases where English writers have been concerned with the same subjects as the Norwegian authors. This also applies to other branches of science.

With regard to English accounts of Norwegian life, I have tried to deal as fully with them as I have judged to be necessary for the purpose in hand, paying special attention to the views expressed on the national character. For that end I have inserted a short chapter dealing with the political situation in 1814. The curious contrast between the views adopted by the British Government and the general sentiments of the English people at that time has seemed to me to be of a particular interest as illustrating English views of the Norwegian people at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

In dealing with the literary part of the subject, I have been chiefly concerned with the accounts given of modern Norwegian literature, this being a matter not previously handled.

As for the history of the old Norse and Icelandic literature,¹ it really forms a subject by itself and does not strictly fall within the scope of an inquiry concerned with the accounts of *Norwegian* literature. However, for the sake of the general continuity and in order to complete the survey as far as possible, a short summary of English interest in Norse subjects has been included.

Through the whole account I have confined myself exclusively to England, only here and there making a few allusions to American views on the same subjects. In America the conditions have been entirely different from those in England, the vast number of Scandinavian emigrants there having naturally acted as a vigorous incentive to the diffusion of a general knowledge about the Scandinavian countries. Thus between the years 1884 and 1886 there appeared in Chicago a periodical called *Scandinavia*, to which numerous articles on Scandinavian literature were contributed.

To such and similar accounts no attention has been paid in the present inquiry, which, as has been already said, exclusively aims at giving a picture of the *English attitude* towards the Norwegian population and its culture, as this has been expressed in travellers' accounts and literary criticism during the last centuries.

The enormous material contained in articles, reviews, etc., has compelled me to confine myself on the whole to literary writings of a more pretentious character than those which are generally to be found in newspapers. These have only occasionally been consulted. But having examined such books and periodicals as have been available, I hope that nothing substantial has escaped notice, and that what had to be omitted does not essentially differ in character from what has been taken into account.

¹ An excellent and exhaustive monograph on this subject is Mr. Frank Farley's *Scandinavian Influences on the English Romantic Movement in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston, 1903). Cf. Part II, Ch. I of this study.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to Professor W. A. Craigie for the generous and practical interest he has taken in my work.

I also wish to thank Mrs. Morison for her kind permission to quote her translation of Wergeland's poem on p. 91.

C. B. BURCHARDT.

MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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PART I

*ENGLISH ACCOUNTS AND VIEWS OF
NORWEGIAN LIFE*

CHAPTER I

EARLY ENGLISH ACCOUNTS OF NORWAY AND THE NORWEGIANS

THE first traceable information about Norway in England is that conveyed by King Alfred in his account of Ohthere's voyage, appended to his translation from Orosius. About the year 890 Ohthere, a wealthy Norwegian from the district of Halogaland, had come to King Alfred's court. Telling the king about a voyage he had made to the seas north of Norway, he described that country as very long and very narrow and full of rocks and mountains. The only places which could be pastured or ploughed, he said, were those close by the sea; the inhabitants kept sheep and swine and bred tame deer, which they called reindeer.

Historic developments soon made the English better acquainted with the land and the people of the North. A Norwegian king was educated in England and christened there; another king fought the British in the battle of London Bridge; Norwegians ravaged on the coasts of England, and as late as 1066 a king of Norway tried to conquer the British kingdom. King Harald lost the battle, but it is interesting to note that William of Malmesbury, in his *Chronicle of the Kings of England*¹ (1120), speaks with admiration of the courage of the Northmen as displayed in this battle: 'Yet, however reluctantly posterity may believe it, one single Norwegian for a long time delayed the triumph of so many and such

¹ Bk. ii, ch. xiii.

great men. For standing on the bridge, which is called Standford Brigge, after having killed several of our party, he prevented the whole from passing over.'

Shortly afterwards the descendant of a Norwegian nobleman crossed the Channel from France, and the English crown passed into the hands of the Normans:

'There shall a Lyon from the sea-bord wood
Of *Neustria* come roring, with a crew
Of hungry whelpes. . . .'¹

In the English chronicles and romances of the twelfth century Norway figured from time to time in connection with the Arthurian legends. Geoffrey of Monmouth, in his *Historia Britonum* (1147), tells the story how King Arthur, not contented with his own kingdom, decided to conquer Norway, and how he defeated Riculf, the Norwegian king, and bestowed the crown on Loth, his own brother-in-law.² This Loth, Geoffrey tells us, was one of the six kings whom Arthur later summoned to his court to be present at his coronation.³

From Geoffrey the story passed on to later writers. Thus it makes its reappearance in Wace's *Geste des Bretons* (1155)⁴ and in Layamon's *Brut* (circa 1205).⁵ Both of these writers added a little to the story. In Layamon we get a detailed description of the battle, in which twenty thousand Norwegians were killed:

Bruttes weoren balde
þa Noreine heo aqualden.

After the victory we are told how Arthur spoke with Loth and 'bade him hold good peace and bade him love

¹ Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queen* (1590), bk. iii, canto iii, 47.

² Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Britonum*, bk. ix, ch. xi.

³ *Ibid.*, bk. ix, ch. xii.

⁴ Wace, *Le Roman de Brut* (Rouen, 1838), vol. ii, pp. 77-80, (v. 10050-10120).

⁵ Layamon's *Brut*, ed. by Sir Frederic Madden, K.H. (1847), vol. ii, pp. 547-56, 1605.

his peaceful people, and those that would not hold peace to fell them to the ground.'

The Arthurian romances continued to occupy a favourite place in mediaeval English literature. For centuries their historic truth remained undisputed. Even a comparatively late chronicler like William Lambarde (1536-1601) gave credence to them. In his *'Αρχαιονομία* (1568) he repeats the account of Arthur's conquest of Norway, but in a somewhat altered form, which shows that later hands than Layamon's had been dealing with the story. He tells us how Arthur valiantly subdued all Scantia or Norway, the people of which country were wild and savage and had not in them the love of God nor of their neighbours: 'quia. ab aquilone pandetur omne malum.' Yet there were at that time (i.e. A.D. 517) among them certain Christians living in secret, and King Arthur, being a good Christian, caused them all to be baptized and to worship God. He also obtained the sanction of the Pope and the Court of Rome that Norway should for ever be annexed to the crown of Britain:

'For this cause the Norses say, that they ought to dwell with us in this Kingdome, to wit, that they belong to the crowne of Britaine: for they had rather dwell here then in their owne native countrey, which is drie and full of mountaines and barren, and no graine growing there, but in certeine places.'¹

It is evident that this new form of the story was built upon more recent information about Norway than that which was available in England at the time of Layamon. The wars between the two countries having come to an end, trade had become the chief means of a mutual intercourse. A number of documents were sent by the King of England to the Norwegian kings respecting the trade between the two countries and English merchants

¹ *'Αρχαιονομία*, fol. 137 (1568). The above translation of this passage is given by Hakluyt (*Principal Navigations*, 1589).

resident in Norway.¹ This intercourse had also resulted in a somewhat greater knowledge of the Norwegian people in England. However, respecting the country itself but little was known as yet. In his *Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge*, ch. vi (1547), Andrew Boorde described it as a wild and cold country, in which 'there be many rewde people,' who have little corn and little to eat and drink, but live by fishing and hunting. There are in Norway, he says, many white bears and monstrous beasts, wells which turn wood into iron, and parts of the country in which the sun never sets during the summer. Money is scarce, for the inhabitants barter their goods for other merchandises :

'I am a pore man borne in Norway
Hawkes and fysh of me merchauntes do by al day.'

The first accounts of travellers' impressions were given in 1589 by Richard Hakluyt in his *Principal Navigations, Voiages and Discoveries of the English Nation*. This work, which in 1625 was supplemented by Samuel Purchas's *Hakluytus Posthumous or Purchas, His Pilgrimes*, contained narratives of voyages along the Norwegian coasts and descriptions of miserable sailors making their way through some barren and thinly-inhabited island. As these sailors had but little intention of exploring the country, the information they give is interesting more because of its curiosity than of any reliable statement it contains.

Yet some of their observations give evidence of manners, which the records of later travellers have confirmed. Already the hospitality of the population is noted : 'In Norway and in White Russia, strangers pay nothing for entertainment, but salute, sit downe, and expect the Hosts expenses. . . . To offer money is a disgrace.'² Life among the Norwegians is by these early travellers

¹ See Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations* (1589), for documents issued by Henry III in 1229, by Edward II in 1313, by Henry IV in 1404, and by Henry VI in 1430 and 1432.

² *Master George Barkley's Travels* (1605), Purchas, vol. xiii, p. 454, ed. James MacLehose & Sons, Glasgow, 1905-7.

described as exceedingly simple: the fishermen are by nature 'indued with understanding to know how to make buckets, tunnes, baskets . . . they are very curteous one toward another and serviceable, desirous to please rather for love, than for hope of any gift or good turne to bee done them againe.' This gentleness on the part of the population must have puzzled all who identified the Norwegians with a certain stamp of fierceness and ferocity. This is how, according to Purchas (vol. xiii, p. 446), the fact is to be accounted for:

'It is remarkable that the Northerne humour of spoile, slaughter and bloud continued whilst they were Pagans, and expired in manner with their Paganism . . . as if God would first by them punish the vices of those times, and withall conquer the conquerors with the religion of the conquered, and by so strange a way bring the Northerne world (by this way of destroying) to salvation. Since that time the state of Norway, Iceland and other parts hath decayed in numbers of shipping, courage of men and other meanes of earthly greatnesse.'

The people are in Purchas described as devout and of so great simplicity that they neither know nor understand what adultery means:

'And—to give you a true prooffe hereof, I, Christophoro, say, that we were in the house of our foresaid host, and slept in one and the same cottage, where hee also and his wife slept, and successively in one bed neere adjoyning were their daughters and sonnes of ripe age together, neere to the which beds we also slept . . . so that when they went to sleepe or when they arose, or when they stripped themselves naked and wee in the like manner, wee indifferently saw one another and yet with that purity as if wee had beene little children.'¹

Their food is fish—mostly stock-fish, which is also used as payment instead of coined money; further, in small quantities 'beefe and milke of kine, of the which with

¹ *The Shipwracke of Piero Quirino*, A.D. 1431, described by Christophoro Fioravanti (Purchas, vol. xiii, p. 423).

rice, and I know not what other mixture, they make bread of a naughtie taste.' ¹

The equality of life is likewise commented upon : ' The difference betweene the Gentlemen and Bore, is in his command, being otherwise as raggedly apparelled as hee, with twentie patches on his breech, and barefoot in winter.' ²

All these observations have only reference to the people living in the northern parts of Norway. A few remarks on the scenery of the country are frequently added. Especially the maelström is a source of great wonderment ; a whirlpool—

' which from halfe ebbe untill half flood, maketh such a terrible noyse that it shaketh the rings in the doores of the inhabitants houses of the said ilands ten miles off. Also if there cometh any whale within the current of the same, they make a pittifull cry. Moreover if great trees be carryed into it by force of streames, and after with the ebbe be cast out againe, the ends and boughes of them have beene so beaten, that they are like the stalkes of hemepe, that is bruized.' ³

Many of these travellers were not English. The expedition which would probably have proved of the greatest value was that of Sir Hugh Willoughby, sent by Sebastian Cabot, ' Governor of the Mysterie and Companie of the Merchants adventurers for the discoverie of regions, dominions, ilands and places unknown.' But Sir Hugh Willoughby and his company all perished among the snow and ice of Lapland (1553).⁴

Though trade gradually brought England and Norway into nearer relations with each other,⁵ the contact thus

¹ *The Shipwracke of Piero Quirino*, Purchas, vol. xiii, p. 430.

² *George Barkley's Travels* (1605), Purchas, vol. xiii, p. 458.

³ *The First Voyage of Master Anthonie Jenkinson from the City of London . . . in the year 1557*, Hakluyt, vol. i, 311 (1589).

⁴ Hakluyt (1589), vol. i; Purchas, vol. xi, pp. 595-600.

⁵ As late as 1731 there was a walk at the Royal Exchange called 'Norway Walk' (Olsvig, *Det store Vendepunkt i Holbergs liv.*, p. 6).

established does not seem at first to have had any immediate effect on people outside the business world. Several instances of surprising ignorance with regard to Norwegian matters may be met with. Thus Symon Patrick, in his *Advice to a Friend* (1674), introduces the following amusing simile to set forth the everlasting pleasure of religion, which is to follow after the first repugnance :

‘ The poor Norwegian, whom stories tell of, was afraid to touch roses, when he first saw them, for fear they should burn his fingers. He much wondered to see that trees (as he thought) should put forth flames and blossoms of fire : before which he held up his hands to warm himself, not daring to approach any nearer. But as he, as you may be sure, was happily undeceived, when he came not only to touch, but likewise to smell those innocent flowers, which seemed to burn his eyes : so will it be with us when we come rightly to understand and feel the pleasure that religion gives us.’¹

Similar ignorance is also displayed in William Nicholson’s account of Norway, contributed to Moses Pitt’s *English Atlas* (1680)—in which work one may read how the air along the western coast of Norway is corrupted by the putrefaction and stench of a certain kind of rats, called lemmings, ‘ which infect the whole country with the epidemical disease of the jaundice and a giddiness in the head, which is most especially apt to seize on strangers unacquainted with the danger and unarmed against the distemper.’ The inhabitants are described as generally effeminate and lazy ; they drink three draughts of ale : one in remembrance of God, the second to the King’s health, and the third to the Queen’s.

Different is the account of the Norwegians given by Viscount Molesworth in his notorious *Account of Denmark* (1694). ‘ The inhabitants,’ he says, ‘ are a hardy, laborious and honest sort of people ; they are esteemed by others

¹ Symon Patrick, *Advice to a Friend*, ch. iii, p. 61. An allusion to this story is inserted into the diary of Thomas Moore (April 12, 1821).

and esteem themselves much superior to the Danes, whom they call upbraidingly Jutes.' ¹

Yet the English remained on the whole ignorant as to the true character of the Norwegians. Holberg tells us that an Englishman he met at Gravesend put some questions to him about the climate and situation of Norway, which he supposed to be a city of Sweden. 'I have frequently remarked,' Holberg continues, 'similar instances of ignorance with respect to everything connected with Northern nations in England, in France and in Italy.' ²

Half a century later the stock of information about Norway was increased by the translation of Pontoppidan's *Natural History* (1755). The bishop himself in a preface states his work to have been composed 'with a view to promote the glory of God,' and his piety and credulity are mingled together in the most amazing way. The *Retrospective Review* for 1826 ³ made the following mocking remarks about some of the bishop's statements :

'Pontoppidan declares that bears invariably attack pregnant women—but no evil without its corresponding good: this bearish instinct is found to conduce wonderfully to the preservation of female virtue: if any of the shepherdesses "loses her virtue and becomes pregnant, she then endangers her life as well as the child's doubly." . . . Whether lemmings drop from the sky or blights are generated by snow, it is some satisfaction to find that both are under the control of the church.'

Pontoppidan's book is full of the most fantastic descriptions of all kinds of different sea-monsters. But if it be justifiable with the *Retrospective Review* to call him

¹ This characterization was repudiated by Dr. Will. King in his *Animadversions on a Pretended Account of Denmark* (1694). Dr. King considered it 'wonderful to see two nations . . . agree so very well together.'

² Holberg's Autobiography (English translation [1827], pp. 17-18).

³ pp. 181-213.

'a very wholesale dealer in gratuitous and absolute falsehood,' it is only fair to bear in mind that the book also conveys a good deal of valuable information about the country itself. However, it is the credulity of the author and his very falsehoods that make the book so entertaining to the common reader, and it is to these attractions, no doubt, that the popularity of the book in England must chiefly be ascribed. It was evidently the reading of Pontoppidan which suggested Tennyson's poem 'The Kraken'; and his book must also have been the source from which Edgar Allan Poe derived the idea of his fantastic story, *A Descent into the Maelström*.¹

In John Williams's *The Rise, Progress and Present State of the Northern Governments* (1777),² the Norwegians are again favourably contrasted with the Danes.' The latter are idle and vain, the former free, generous, and industrious; the latter 'educated in all the principles of a slavish timidity,' the former 'liberal and free in their deportment,' bold and courageous: 'The Norwegians are plain, honest dealers, but the same character cannot justly be given to the Danes, who would sacrifice their interest and friends to parade with an empty title.' 'The odels-right of the Norwegian farmers is considered the main cause of the happy condition of the people.

¹ This is apparent from the fact that Poe quotes Jonas Ramus, whose book has never been translated into English, and even is scarcely known in Norway, but from which Pontoppidan quotes certain passages.

² Vol. xx of *The World Displayed, or a Curious Collection of Voyages and Travels*, contains an extract from 'the Journal of a gentleman employed by the North Sea Company of Copenhagen to make discoveries' (3rd ed. 1778). The author was a Frenchman, and this extract from his journal deals mainly with the life of the Laplanders. The Norwegian peasants are praised for their simplicity and hospitality.

³ Norway in this work comes in only incidentally. The author's embittered tone against the government of Denmark is explained by his personal friendship with Struensee and his indignation at the fate of that unfortunate minister.

⁴ vol. i, pp. 361-90.

Thus Coxe¹: 'A traveller must be blind who does not instantly perceive the difference between the free peasants of Norway and the enslaved vassals of Denmark.' 'The Norwegian peasants,' the same writer continues, 'possess much spirit and fire in their manner, are frank and undaunted, yet not insolent, never fawning on their superiors, yet paying a proper respect to those above them.'

Similarly appreciative is the author of *Letters from Scandinavia* (1796)²: 'The Norwegians are a fine race of men, of a free and generous spirit and watch over their liberties with unremitted vigilance'; they are active and honourable in their dealings, manly, and of a strong constitution: 'They do not bury themselves in furs . . . they pique themselves on keeping cold at defiance, and, to shew their hardiness, will even put snow into their bosoms'; they are fond of dancing and determined to be pleased, but violent in their passions, especially when intoxicated. Being of a quarrelsome disposition, they are apt to sell everything and even ruin themselves for the pleasure of bringing lawsuits against every person who vexes them.

Less favourably impressed with the Norwegians than were the travellers who had preceded her, was Mary Wollstonecraft, who in her *Letters on Norway, Sweden, and Denmark* (1796) expended a good deal of unnecessary compassion on what she thought the miseries of the Norwegian population. It may well be that Dr. Johnson was right in thinking that affection for their old dwellings and the terror of a general change were the chief reasons for preventing the Norwegians from emigrating to some part of America, where they could have the same produce from land with the tenth part of the labour.³ But there is no reason for

¹ Coxe's *Travels in Norway* (1792), reprinted in John Pinkerton's *General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels*, vol. vi, pp. 356-72 (1808-1814).

² William Thomson, *Letters from Scandinavia*. See especially vol. i, pp. 365-77.

³ Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Oxford edition, i, 401 [A.D. 1769].

believing that the Norwegians were worse situated than the poor classes in most other countries. Malthus, whose travels in Norway took place only three years after Mary Wollstonecraft's book was published, declared the state of the poor in Norway in many respects to be better than in England.¹ Miss Wollstonecraft's statement is therefore not to be trusted; in fact her letters are incessantly conveying false impressions with respect to her subject—they 'exhibit the ravings of a distempered imagination brooding over her hapless fate.'² After having spent a short time at Tönsberg, mostly alone—only now and then in the company of a few captains of ships and without knowing a single word of the language—she writes: 'I am persuaded that I have formed a very just opinion of the character of the Norwegians.' Her visit was confined to a few seaports on the southern coast, and the people she met there could hardly be expected to display the national character to its advantage. However, it is only fair to admit that though her reflections are frequently unjust, she sometimes succeeds in making observations to the point, as for instance in the following delightful remark: 'Reason on any subject of change and they stop you by saying that "the town would talk."' Who would deny that this happily reflects the very atmosphere of a Norwegian country-town even at the present day?

During the first twenty years of the nineteenth century a number of books of travel and history bearing on Scandinavia appeared in English,³ most of which were the

¹ Malthus, *Essay on Population* (1803), p. 436. As late as 1836, Mr. Laing confirms the statement: 'The lower class in Norway is better provided both in respect of habitation and that of food than the lower class of Scotland and Ireland' (*Laing's Journal*, p. 288).

² T. Forester, *Norway and its Scenery* (1853), p. 6.

³ Books of travel:

(a) *Travels through Sweden, Finland, and Lapland to the North Cape in the years 1798–1799*, by Joseph Acerbi (London, 1802).

(b) *Travels through Denmark and Sweden*, etc., by Louis de Boisgelin, Knight of Malta (London, 1810).

work of foreign authors. Through these works as well as through the reviews in the periodicals the peculiarities of the Norwegian people and their country were for the first time brought before the English public on a larger scale.¹

In an article in the *Edinburgh Review* for July 1803 the Norwegians are once more favourably contrasted with the Danes, whose 'character is not agreeable,' while 'the Norwegian expresses firmness and elevation in all that he says or does . . . ; he has always been a free man and you read his history in his looks. He is not apt, to be sure, to forgive his enemies ; but he does not deserve any, for he is hospitable in the extreme.' Scarcely less sympathetically are the Norwegians contrasted with their Eastern neighbours, the Swedes. Lamothe, a Frenchman who had become naturalized in England,² when travelling

(c) *A Picturesque Journey to the North Cape*, by A. F. Skioldebrand (London, 1813). (Reviewed by the *Quarterly Review*, April 1814.)

(d) *Travels through Norway and Lapland during the years 1806-1808*, by Leopold von Buch. Transl. by John Black (London, 1813). (Reviewed by the *Quarterly Review*, April 1814, and by the *Edinburgh Review*, October 1813.)

(e) *Voyage dans le Nord de l'Europe, consistant principalement en promenades en Norvège* par A. Lamothe (à Londres, 1813). (Reviewed by the *Quarterly Review*, April 1814, and by the *Eclectic Review*, July 1815.)

The *Monthly Review* for 1819 contained reviews of :

(a) I. P. Catteau-Galleville, *Histoire des Révolutions de Norvège*, etc. (à Paris, 1818).

(b) *The History of Norway from the Earliest Times*, by G. L. Baden, LL.D., and from the Union of Colmer by Baron Holberg. Transl. and continued to the present time by A. Anderson Feldborg.

(c) John Brown, *The Northern Courts* (London, 1818).

¹ *An Account of a Religious Society in Norway, called Saints . . .* appeared in London in 1814, being an account of the sect founded by Hans Nilsen Hauge.

² Lamothe with two young Oxonians, one of whom was Sir Thomas Acland, travelled in Norway in 1807. When the war broke out they were interned for some time at Kongsberg, 'the Norwegian Verdun,' where the 'Danes [?] made no scruple of limiting the scientific pursuits of our travellers to the immediate vicinity of an inland

in Sweden and Norway became aware of a considerable difference between the hospitality shown him in the two countries. In Sweden 'a stranger who does not understand the language of the country is exposed to all kinds of mistakes and frauds,' while the Norwegians seemed pleased with anything: 'When they are satisfied with what they receive, they give you a good grapple of the hand,—when dissatisfied I do not know how they show it, such an instance not having come to my knowledge.'¹

The periodicals reproduce the impressions of the travellers. Like the hospitality, the honesty, amiability, and frankness of the population are much praised. The chief fault to be met with is the unquestionable and regrettable 'Adoration to Bacchus' which, according to Lamothe, explains the fact of the physical degeneration of the race from the 'colossal forms of their ancestors.' But there are also certain other peccadilloes which 'the children of Gudbrandsdal' are not entirely free from. They are judged guilty of a 'babbling loquacity, . . . contentment with poverty, contempt of commerce, love of idleness, and complacency in dirt or at least in slovenliness.'² However, it is pointed out that 'here is the temple of honesty. Here the virtues of the golden age have found an asylum.'³ And the usual strain running through every single article is that of sympathetic praise: 'Brave, honest and intelligent, the Norwegians resemble the English in manners,

town, where they were compelled to remain as prisoners on parole' (*Quarterly Review*, April 1814).

Sir Thomas Acland in a speech in the House of Commons (May 12, 1814) later paid a handsome tribute to the Norwegians, declaring himself, while a prisoner in Norway, to have 'experienced the greatest kindness and liberality' (see Hansard's *Parliamentary Debates*).

¹ In Jens Wolff's *Sketches on a Tour to Copenhagen* (London, 1814) the frank and honest deportment of the Norwegians is contrasted with the 'submissive and flattering terms' of the Swedes when accosting strangers.

² *Eclectic Review*, July 1815.

³ Lamothe.

in feeling and in language ¹ more than any people upon earth.' ²

This English sympathy for Norway, we may be allowed to suppose, was as sincere and original as the Norwegian admiration for the British. Sympathy for England had always been a feature of the national character of the Norwegians—so much so that Wessel, although himself a hater of the Germans, had once reproached his countrymen for confining their affections too exclusively to themselves and the English: 'they deem that men can only come from England and their own cold home.'

This natural sympathy for England was not weakened; it continued in spite of the development of political hostilities, and was never more universal or striking than during the first half of the nineteenth century. It naturally added to the English sympathy for Norway: 'It is not possible for a writer of this country to speak ill of the Norwegians, for of all strangers, the people of Norway love and admire the British the most.' ³

¹ This resemblance in language was carried a little too far when the *Edinburgh Review* for October 1813 declared 'stor,' in Scandinavian signifying 'great,' to be the origin of the English words 'store' and storehouse.'

² *Quarterly Review*, April 1814.

³ *Edinburgh Review*, July 1803.

CHAPTER II

ENGLAND AND NORWAY IN 1814

THE frank and genuine esteem in which Norway was held by the English nation at the beginning of the nineteenth century, of which we have just seen a few stray instances, was soon to be displayed in a far more important and positive way, namely, in a sincere and enthusiastic plea for the Norwegian cause, when, as a consequence of the coalition established between England and Sweden at Stockholm in 1812, the political independence of Norway was at stake.

Already the bombardment of Copenhagen and the seizure of the Danish fleet (1807) had been met by the most energetic condemnation in England, and according to the *Edinburgh Review* the Norwegians themselves 'were anxious to exculpate our national honour and to charge all the blame of that inglorious exploit upon the ministry alone.'¹

By the Treaty of Kiel (January 14, 1814) the Danish

¹ *Edinburgh Review*, October 1813.

Thus also Jacob Aall: 'The cruelty was entirely on the side of the English government, that unjustly and treacherously ordered the bombardment of Copenhagen, not on the side of its instruments, who in a martial manner carried the cruel command into effect.'

'The English people gave in many ways evidence of their sympathy with the unfortunate fate of Denmark' (Jacob Aall, *Memoirs*, pp. 34, 606).

'L. v. Buch tells us that at Christiania every appearance which had the least tendency to justify the English was anxiously laid hold of. Every measure of a hostile or unjustifiable nature they imputed to the ministry, and every action of kindness they uniformly imputed to the nation at large' (John Black's preface to v. Buch's *Travels*, London, 1813).

monarch transferred the Norwegian crown to the Swedish king. The event was considered by the British Government as a triumph for its foreign policy. The Norwegian question had not appeared to be without difficulties. In 1813 Lord Castlereagh, the Foreign Secretary, had written (April 28) to Lord Cathcart, Ambassador and Military Commissioner with the Russian army :

‘ We never have disguised from ourselves the embarrassments of the Norwegian point ; but it was an engagement made in the day of adversity for the preservation of Russia. . . . Neither Russia nor Great Britain (were it even politic) can now break with Sweden, without a loss of character.’

When the negotiations between Sweden and Denmark were opened, they were watched with anxiety by the British statesmen.

‘ I trust Denmark is in such a state that she must yield and thus settle the whole question,’ Lord Aberdeen wrote to Lord Castlereagh (January 9, 1814); and a week later he wrote again : ‘ Thank God there appears to be a good prospect of a speedy settlement of the affairs of Denmark and Sweden. The state of these negotiations had become so complicated that it was scarcely possible to understand it.’

However, the situation was to become still more complicated : the Norwegians, by the Treaty of Kiel freed from allegiance to their Danish monarch, refused to acknowledge any right on his part to bestow their kingdom on a foreign prince, and declared themselves independent.

Though the British Government had pledged itself to assist Bernadotte in acquiring Norway, the news of the political developments in Norway was received with great enthusiasm in certain quarters in England.

‘ The spirit of independence has spread,’ the *Morning Post* wrote (February 21, 1814), ‘ and though the diversion must be lamented, as it may diminish the force employed to reduce the Gallic Despot to submission, yet it is im-

possible to blame the patriotism of the Norwegians in refusing to become a Swedish province. . . . The decided sense of the whole Norwegian nation has now been so loudly pronounced that we hope it will not be disregarded. . . . It would not be consistent in the Crown Prince [Bernadotte] after having so gloriously assisted enslaved nations in casting off detested chains, to impose, by force, his yoke upon a people which expresses such abhorrence of a foreign master. . . . Neither could the Allies countenance him in that attempt, and yet preserve their titles of liberators and restorers of Europe.'

Much the same views were taken by the *Courier* (of the same date), which held that the political events in Norway were a matter that concerned Norway, Denmark, and Sweden alone, and that English interference could not be demanded, the naval co-operation of England having been rendered unnecessary by the Treaty of Kiel.

Such, however, was not the opinion of Lord Castlereagh, who, in a letter of March 7, 1814, ordered Mr. Thornton, the British deputy at Stockholm, to repeat to the Prince Royal the assurance 'that nothing can be further from the truth than any notion that the British Government feels the slightest inclination to support or connive at the independence of Norway.'

But the kind disposition of the English, as expressed in the leading articles of the two papers just quoted, did not fail to impress itself on the Norwegians. It induced Christian Fredrik to send Carsten Anker as a deputy to England to set forth the Norwegian cause and, if possible, to obtain a British intervention in favour of Norway. Carsten Anker arrived in London on March 24, and had audiences both with Mr. Hamilton, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and with the Duke of Gloucester, the son-in-law of George III, who belonged to the opposition. He also obtained an audience with Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister, at Fife House. But his mission was without success. He told the Premier of the absolute refusal of the Norwegians ever to consent

to a union with Sweden, but was in return informed of the firm decision of the British Government never to support the Norwegian resistance against Swedish claims. 'Is this your Lordship's ultimatum?' 'Yes, it is, Sir.' 'Well, then, let this be our sentence of death. For Norway will never become Swedish, whatever may happen.'

The blockade of Norway was then decided upon. But once more the opposition broke loose—this time more potent than before. The subject was brought up in the Commons, where the policy of the Government was censured by Mr. Whitbread and Mr. Wynn.¹ In the Lords, Earl Grey, Lord Holland, and Lord Grenville spoke in favour of Norway.²

'What people is it, whose fate you are to decide?' Earl Grey exclaimed—'a people who have never done you any wrong, who have never injured any of your interests—a people who are known to you only by their virtuous character, by their meritorious services, by their interchange of good offices, by their extension of your commercial relations. . . . I do besides feel a lively interest in favour of a nation struggling so valiantly as the Norwegians continue to do, in support of their rights and privileges, and it will be consistent with the honour and character of this country and Your Lordships, to manifest a similar feeling.'

Earl Grey ended his appeal by making a petition to the Prince Regent that the blockade should be repealed, but his proposition was rejected by 135 to 34 votes and the ministers carried the day.³ A similar address moved by Mr. Wynn two days later in the Commons 'met with

¹ Hansard's *Parliamentary Debates*, 1814: April 21, 29, May 2.

² *Ibid.*, April 29, May 5, 6, 10.

³ A protest was entered on the Journals, including, among others, the names of the following members: Augustus Frederick, William Frederick (i.e. the Duke of Gloucester), Grey, Essex, Grenville, Rosslyn, Clifton, FitzWilliam, Stanhope, Norfolk.

See Hansard's *Parliamentary Debates*, 1814: May 10.

⁴ *Ibid.*, May 12.

the same fate. Mr. Wynn, Mr. Whitbread, Sir James Mackintosh, and Mr. Ponsonby all made noble efforts to rescue the Norwegian people from hunger and starvation. Mr. Canning, however, although declaring himself willing to pay any price to get rid of the obligation, considered England bound by her treaty to Russia, and resisted the motion. The latter was subsequently rejected by 229 to 71 votes.

The vindications of Norway were also echoed by men outside the Parliament.¹ In a letter to Earl Grey,² Sir Philip Francis, an esteemed and prominent statesman, who had by this time retired from parliamentary life, entreated his country to renounce its intervention in favour of Sweden and to 'withdraw from any further share in the execution of that felony.' He denied any right on the part of the Danish king to transfer the possession of Norway to Sweden. 'Can you, or any man, state a case in which the king of these United Kingdoms could have a right in any extremity or under any *duress*, to alienate the kingdom of Ireland and transfer it to France?' And he strongly disapproved of the blockade: 'It was not necessary to employ the navy of Britain in so base an occupation. We talk of the honour of the flag, and this is the care we take of it.'

¹ In the *Pamphleteer* for August 1814 there was published *An Appeal to the English Nation in Behalf of Norway* by A. Anderson Feldborg, in which the Norwegian cause was set forth from an entirely Norwegian point of view. Feldborg (b. 1782) was a Dane who in 1802 had come to England. The year previous to the publication of his pamphlet he had issued some *Cursory Remarks on the Meditated Attack on Norway* (London, 1813).

In 1814 there was also printed in London another work on Norway: *Sketches on a Tour to Copenhagen through Norway and Sweden*, by Jens Wolff, Esq., to which was added an appendix containing translations of more than thirty State papers and official documents relative to the proceedings in Norway, including the 110 articles of the new Constitution of Norway. The work was dedicated to 'Christian Fredrik, King of Norway.' For particulars about the author, see note p. 105.

² April 30, 1814, reprinted in the *Pamphleteer* (August 1814).

In a review of this letter in the *Edinburgh Review* (April 1814) the independence of Norway was, if possible, still more fervently pleaded. The author endeavoured to prove that England was not bound by any duty to its treaty with Russia, and that at any rate there was no reason whatever for her being at war with Norway. The latter point was supported by a rather poor and curious argument: 'If Norway is Danish, we are at peace with it, if Swedish we are in alliance with it.' This argument did not at all harmonize with the view which the author adopted throughout the rest of the article—that, while Norway had ceased to be in alliance with Denmark, Sweden had not at the same time acquired any legal claims to it. The justice of the Norwegian cause was further proved by ample quotations from Grotius and Puffendorff¹ and from speeches of prominent English statesmen (Fox, Grenville). The parliamentary resolution on the blockade was commented upon as follows: 'The two houses of Parliament a day or two after voting *unanimously* the strongest address ever presented to the Crown in favour of the African negroes, decided by prodigious majorities, that the Norwegians ought to be starved into a surrender of their liberties. So very discriminating is the philanthropy of this our age and nation!' A union between Norway and Sweden was compared to Russia's partition of Poland, and the Swedish assurance that the union would be to the good of Norway was laconically rendered of no effect by the following remark: 'The slave-trader was held up as the African's friend—as the civilizer of his country.' Everywhere Bernadotte was represented in the least flattering way: as a traitor to his country,² an unskilful general,³ a Falstaff in point of courage, a man of bar-

¹ ' . . . Neque illa regio ulla obligatione videtur impediri, quominus si viribus suis confidat, se occupare volenti resistat, aut pecuniariam deinceps civitatem constituat' (Puffendorff, *De Jur. Nat. et Gent.*, lib. viii, cap. v, § 9).

² Sir Philip Francis, *Letter to Earl Grey* (1814).

³ Sir Robert Wilson, *Sketch of the Campaigns in Poland* (1810), p. 106.

barous mistaken ambition,¹ unduly fond of his neighbour's goods,² and having a sovereign contempt for letters.³

Neither was this sympathy for Norway limited to statesmen or politicians only : it was also shared by a large portion of the British people. Thus the inhabitants of Leith, at a meeting held at the Exchange Coffee-house on Friday, April 29, 1814, 'influenced by feelings of sympathy and commiseration for a people with whom they have long been connected by ties of friendship and commercial intercourse—resolved, that there be presented to his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council a respectful petition . . . earnestly praying that permission be granted to export grain to Norway.'

Thus the opposition to the British Government was strong and lively. The expositions and arguments made against the foreign policy of the Ministry were based upon a natural sympathy with the Norwegian people, upon a strong feeling of the consanguinity of the two nations—a feeling so strong that when even the political currents were setting in a contrary direction, the English people would sooner protest against the Government of their own country than yield the smallest point of their genuine convictions in favour of Norway. It was the same feeling of sympathy which inspired such lines as the following :

' Hail, brave Norwegian, son of freedom, hail !
Oh ! may your cause, your sacred cause prevail ;
And may no hand of rude oppressive power
Crush the bright offspring of this anxious hour.' ⁴

' The protest of the opposition is preserved in history as a worthy indication of the cause of innocence,' a

¹ Sir Philip Francis, *Letter to Earl Grey* (1814).

² Sir Robert Wilson, *Sketch of the Campaigns in Poland* (1810), p. 85.

³ *Edinburgh Review*, January 1809 (art. 'Code de la Conscription').

⁴ 'Norway'—a poem by Charlotte Wardle, 1814.

Norwegian historian has written,¹ 'but at this time it did Norway more harm than good. . . . The opposition in the English Parliament worked as a combustible matter to the Northern blaze of war in 1814.' It certainly made King Christian Fredrik continue to look upon England as the nation that might ultimately bring his cause to victory. In June he sent another Norwegian deputation to England. Though its result was to be no more successful than Carsten Anker's mission had been, it was important in conveying new and strong proofs of English sympathy for Norway.

Thanks to the generosity and obligingness of Captain Mackenzie, the Commodore of the British squadron of blockade outside Kristiansand, the deputation was allowed to sail for England on board an English brig. The commander of this brig, Captain Brine, expressed his sympathy with the position of Norway and declared that he reluctantly allowed himself to be used as an instrument against Norway's bold resolution, but that he sincerely hoped that the good cause of Norway would prevail.² While delayed by governmental orders in Leith, the deputation met with fresh impressions of Scotch hospitality and sympathy. Also during an audience of the Secretary for Home Affairs we find a similar instance of individual sympathy. But the deputation was informed that the Government strongly disapproved of the courtesy shown by Mr. Morier, the English Deputy to Norway—who had expressed his personal sympathy for the Norwegians so far as his authority would permit him—as well as of the kind attentions of Captain Mackenzie. The presence of the Norwegian deputation in London was by no means welcome to the Government. The deputation, in a letter to Lord Sidmouth, then declared it to be below its dignity to apply for a conference, and being requested to proceed to Yarmouth, it had to leave London without even having succeeded in presenting its business. While in Yarmouth

¹ Jacob Aall, *Memoirs*, p. 459.

² *Ibid.*, p. 461.

it had the gratification to read in the papers a bitter censure of the reception it had experienced from the hands of the British Government.¹

If Norway's repeated appeals to the British Cabinet had been without success, the sympathy which its unfortunate fate had aroused among the English people was neither forgotten nor ignored. This was instanced by the address to John Berkely Monk, Esq., dated Reading, May 18, 1814, which opened :

' Sir, as Norwegians and as prisoners of war we should be guilty of a gross dereliction of our duty to our country, if we did not embrace the opportunity now offered us, of evincing our sense of the generous interest which the unhappy situation of Norway has generally excited among the inhabitants of England.'²

Also in Norway itself the kind feelings of the English met with just appreciation. According to evidence given by later travellers, the Norwegians always made the proper distinction between the people of England and the British Cabinet, which acted in opposition to public opinion.³

That some bitterness should be felt was only natural, considering the general disappointment caused by the unhappy issue of so many sanguine expectations. But it is to be supposed that seldom in history has a nation so universally declined to identify the people of a politically hostile country with its ruling Government and refused to regard that people as responsible for the animosity of its acting ministers.

The English blockade of Norway lasted but a short time and was attended with no far-reaching consequences. Friendly relations between the two countries were soon re-established. But still the English continued to look

¹ Aall's *Memoirs*, p. 463.

² The address was signed by fifteen Norwegians (eleven of whom were from Bergen).

³ Derwent Conway, *Personal Narrative of a Journey through Norway, Sweden and Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1829), p. 144 ; T. Forester, *Norway in 1848 and 1849* (London, 1850), p. 236.

upon the policy of 1814 with strong feelings of disapproval. Thus Shelley considered it to be deplorably inconsistent with that reputation for vindicating the liberty of small nations on which his countrymen had always prided themselves. This is the portrait he gives of the Briton in 'Hellas':

'His wishes still are weaker than his fears,
Or he would sell what faith may yet remain
From the oaths broke in Genoa and in Norway.'¹

¹ 'Hellas' (1822), l. 560.

CHAPTER III

ENGLISH TRAVELLERS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY ON NORWEGIAN LIFE AND CHARACTER ¹

FEW people are so little alive to the beauties of nature as was Dr. Johnson, when he said that 'Scotland, like Norway, had noble, wild prospects, but that the noblest prospect which a Scotchman ever sees is the highroad that leads him to England. If such were the views of most people, it is to be feared that very few Englishmen would ever have visited Norway. But fortunately the love of natural beauty is generally more developed than it was in the case of Dr. Johnson. Nearly all the English travellers who wrote of Norway during the nineteenth century had previously visited the country as tourists, being attracted by the beautiful scenery of the fjords and the magnificent views of the mountains. They all indulge in natural descriptions, displaying a particular predilection for the curiosities of the country, especially for the marvels of the Maelström. Already Malthus, in his *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1803),² had spoken with great enthusiasm of the beauties of the Norwegian valleys, and later writers vie with each other in their search after laudatory phrases. 'Whenever I take up Ossian,' one traveller writes, 'I read simple and forcible descriptions of scenes and effects, which fell under my own observation in Norway.'³

However, the travellers did not often confine themselves

¹ See Appendix A.

² p. 134. Malthus was one of Dr. Clarke's fellow-travellers (1799), but parted from him in Sweden for an independent tour in Norway.

³ Edward Price, *Journal* (1834), pp. 25-6.

to descriptions of picturesque scenery. They also boldly ventured upon an estimation of the people, of the manners and morals of the nation. As only the minority of the travellers possessed any previous knowledge of the country and its language, the value of their observations is only too often diminished by a constant superficiality and sometimes even by an amazing lack of judgment. In most cases the journeys did not exceed more than a couple of months—sometimes only a few weeks, and were as a rule limited to certain districts of the country. To trust to impressions gathered in this inadequate way for the characteristic features of the whole Norwegian population is the common fault with most of these authors, who, though they may have had no knowledge of the language, are seldom satisfied with launching less than two diffuse volumes on their summer excursion. ‘Travellers who require that every nation should resemble their native country, had better stay at home,’ Mary Wollstonecraft wrote in her letters on Norway.¹ Yet none was ever more guilty of that fault than the amiable and unhappy authoress herself. The less the qualifications for forming a judgment, the more arrogantly dogmatic are the assertions of these travellers, who only too often fail to see that their impressions have been based upon a more or less accidental observation. In all countries there are affable and obliging people as well as rude and insulting ones. Which of these the traveller happens to fall in with will always to some degree be a matter of chance. Consequently it is not surprising to find that the travellers often differ in opinion and frequently contradict each other, some being excessive in their praise, others in their complaints.

There are, however, two faults of which nearly all the writers agree in stating the Norwegians to be guilty, and their statements in these respects are so unanimous, that there can be left but very little doubt as to their truthfulness.

¹ Mary Wollstonecraft, *Letters* (1796), Cassell's Nat. Libr. ed. (1889), p. 52.

The vice of *drunkenness* is assigned to all Norwegians, this being largely due to the fact that the peasants for a long time were permitted to distil corn-brandy—‘to them the very essence of life’¹—without any taxation. It is certainly not an exclusively favourable picture of the Norwegians which may be gathered from these various books of travel. We are told that people are not able to work on Mondays.² The visit of a stranger is always the signal for broaching a bottle. At great festivals the national song is regarded as a pretext for draining the cups, and patriotism requires the toast to be frequently repeated. Also the climate is pleaded in excuse of this ‘odious vice.’ Even boys of twelve and fourteen years of age take glasses of brandy ‘that would have astonished an English coalman,’³ and it is only a wonder how spontaneous combustion is eluded. However, the vice does not interfere with the happiness of the victims, who seem rather to demonstrate the truth of Dr. Johnson’s remark that a man is never happy but in the moment when he is drunk. At a dinner party at Holmestrand, at which the narrator was present, one of the party, having drunk as much as he possibly could, exclaimed: ‘I can drink no more, but set the bowl under my nose.’⁴ In another instance a man of Kongsvinger confessed to having drunk three bottles of spirit within twenty-four hours.⁵ However, the addiction to drink seems to have had no effect on the health of the men, the longevity of whom is repeatedly dealt with as a most amazing problem. One traveller mentions a man who married at the age of a hundred and thirteen and died at the age of a hundred and forty-six⁶; while another tells the story of an entertainment given in honour of King Christian VI, at which

¹ J. Barrow, *Excursions*, etc. (1834), p. 230.

² Rev. R. Everest, *A Journey through Norway* (1829), p. 81.

³ Lieut. W. H. Breton, *Scandinavian Sketches* (1835), p. 190.

⁴ Derwent Conway, *A Personal Narrative* (1829), p. 210.

⁵ Lieut. Breton, *Scandinavian Sketches* (1835), p. 191.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

four married peasants, none of whom were under a hundred years old, danced merrily before His Majesty.¹ An old man of Telemarken of seventy-four, after having consumed more than four and a half claret-glasses of corn-brandy, once told the traveller that he had all his life enjoyed good health, which he ascribed in a great measure to this excellent drink.² ‘The fresh cold air of the mountains does wonders also in dispelling the intoxicating fumes of their darling beverage,’ is the explanation put forward by one of the travellers.³

Nothing would be more tempting than to accuse these statements of a wild exaggeration, but there can hardly be found any argument against them. Nor do the more favourable testimonies of a few travellers convincingly destroy them. John Barrow, indeed, thinks that it speaks highly in favour of the Norwegians that there is so little drunkenness among them⁴; while Laing, whose sympathy for Norway is frequently expressed in an enthusiastic panegyric of the moral character of the population, confines himself to saying that he never saw an intoxicated person *in the morning*.⁵ Nor is his second defence of any greater value: ‘I never saw a man at work or a soldier in regimentals, in liquor’⁶—which is scarcely to be wondered at, the explanation probably being that no drunken man would ever be seen working.

When, later, stringent restrictions were placed on the sale and manufacture of spirits, the vice of drunkenness became less flagrant, and later travellers agree in stating it to be almost extinct in Norway.⁷ To a Norwegian of the present day the censure of the English travellers con-

¹ W. Wilson, *Travels in Norway* (1826), p. 86.

² Derwent Conway, *Personal Narrative* (1829), p. 103.

³ J. Milford, *Norway*, etc. (1842), p. 317.

⁴ John Barrow, *Excursions*, etc. (1834), p. 103.

⁵ Samuel Laing, *Journal of a Residence* (1836), p. 171.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 292.

⁷ Rev. F. Metcalfe, *Oxonian in Norway* (1856), p. 103; W. Williams, *Through Norway with Knapsack* (1859), p. 29.

cerning the degree of drunkenness seems almost incomprehensible, and it would be interesting to know how far the travellers, who once complained of the excessive indulgence in spirit among the Norwegians, would have approved of the rapid growth and victorious development which teetotalism has later enjoyed in Norway.

[The second complaint brought against the Norwegians, which also is of an almost unanimous character, is the accusation of *greed of money*.] This, however, does not relate to the whole population, but is generally made against the inhabitants of the towns and the frequented places along the Grand Tour—wherefore also many travellers are generous enough to ascribe this desire to take advantage of a stranger to the demoralizing influence of English lavishness and the corruption caused by English prodigality.¹ Apart from some single instances of honesty,² there is said to be among the lower classes an ‘avidity of money with an indifference as to the means of acquiring it, that reminds one of Italy,’³ the innkeepers being particularly noted for their impositions on the strangers.⁴ ‘An Englishman they seemed to consider as a moving treasury, which at their demand would be immediately opened.’⁵ Barrow and Bilton, indeed, declare an attempt at imposition to be a rare instance in Norway,⁶ Breton and Milford also adding that honesty appears on the whole to be universal⁷; while Mr. Inglis admits that the Norwegian peasantry is invariably greedy—however,

¹ R. G. Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians* (1840), p. 32; J. Milford, *Norway*, etc. (1842), p. 295; F. Metcalfe, *Oxonian in Thelemarken* (1858), vol. ii, p. 286; W. Williams, *Through Norway*, etc. (1859), p. 242.

² X. and Y., *Long Vacation Ramble* (1857), p. 108.

³ Elliott, *Letters*, etc. (1832), p. 191.

⁴ *The Life of Reginald Heber*, 2 vols. (1830), i, p. 54.

⁵ Sir A. de Capell Brooke, *Travels* (1823), p. 224.

⁶ John Barrow, *Excursions* (1834), p. 246; W. Bilton, *Two Summers in Norway* (1840), i, p. 63, ii, p. 216.

⁷ Lieut. W. Breton, *Scandinavian Sketches* (1835), pp. 196–7; J. Milford, *Norway*, etc. (1842), p. 5.

adding in way of defence that a little matter contents them.¹ Two of the travellers² give the story of the Duke of Devonshire, who during the early part of the century spent a day and a night with four servants at an hotel in Christiania and was charged £50, wherefore he resisted the extortion with the result that in the end he was compelled to pay £50 and £150 in costs: 'So much for Norwegian cheapness and Norwegian law. These canny folk stick by each other so firmly that a stranger has no chance amongst them.' 'What can have given rise to the fables about Norwegian courtesy and Norwegian honesty?'³ Thus also the Rev. Henry Newland, writing in the year 1854, admits that he met with great hospitality in Norway, but adds that the people were delighted to receive the wandering guest's money with two or three hundred per cent. profit on the outlay.⁴

When contrasting the Norwegians with the Swedes, opinions are utterly divided—sometimes to an extent that would scarcely have been surpassed, if it had been the Norwegians or the Swedes themselves who were giving their opinions on the subject. Some give the preference to the Swedish ladies,⁵ some to those of Norway,⁶ which no doubt will always remain a matter of taste. Dr. Clarke declares that in Sweden he was welcome everywhere and no demand for payment was made, while in Norway everything was dearer and, what was worse, the traveller had not even the satisfaction of leaving behind

¹ Derwent Conway, *Personal Narrative* (1829), p. 53.

² W. Wilson, *Travels* (1826), p. 106; R. Bremner, *Excursions* (1840), p. 37.

³ Bremner, *Excursions* (1840), p. 21.

⁴ Rev. H. Newland, *Forest Scenes* (1854), p. 49.

⁵ R. Bremner, *Excursions* (1840), p. 32.

⁶ R. Heber, Letter of August 8, 1805 [*Life of R. Heber* (1830)]; W. Wilson, *Travels* (1826), p. 122; E. Clarke, *Travels*, pt. iii, sect. i (1819), sect. ii (1823), especially sect ii, p. 68. Great praise is bestowed on the Norwegian ladies by W. Bilton, *Two Summers* (1840), etc., i, p. 197.

him countenances of cheerfulness and gratitude.¹ This, however, is fully contradicted by the statements of other travellers, and Mr. Inglis replies to these observations, regarding them as being completely unjust.²

On the whole *hospitality* is judged to be sincere and genuine and regarded to be not so much a duty as a pleasure.³ In every part of the country, the traveller is said to meet with 'boundless hospitality,'⁴ and numerous are the instances given of hearty welcome among the peasants.⁵ The same is also stated to be the case in society, and the praise bestowed on this special feature of the national character is almost unanimous. An exception is Mr. Robert Bremner, than whom it is to be supposed no visitor to Norway ever felt less sympathy for its population. On crossing the frontier between Sweden and Norway, he found the peasants as 'savage in their manners as they are in their looks'⁶—this in spite of the Norwegian passport inspector having treated him to a glass of sherry on his very crossing of that frontier.⁷ He is convinced of 'the baseness of the population, who 'pocket money with insult,'⁸ being further confirmed in his views by the interpreter informing him that 'he never comes amongst the Norwegians without being in terror of his life.'⁹ (A very pleasing picture of an ideal country for a summer excursion!) The gossiping notes of

¹ E. Clarke, *Travels*, sect. i (1819), pp. 616, 621. Thus also Selina Bunbury (1853) and C. L. Brace (American) (1857).

² Derwent Conway, *Personal Narrative* (1829), p. 257.

³ W. Breton, *Scandinavian Sketches* (1835), p. 275.

⁴ W. Wittich, *A Visit to Western Coast of Norway* (1848), p. 215.

⁵ *The Life of Reginald Heber* (1830), p. 57; Derwent Conway, *Personal Narrative* (1829), p. 137; W. Bilton, *Two Summers* (1840), i, p. 88; J. Milford, *Norway* (1842), p. 12; T. Forester, *Norway in 1848* (1850), p. 58; J. D. Forbes, *Norway and its Glaciers* (1853), xxi; X. and Y., *Long Vacation Ramble*, pp. 82, 96; F. Metcalfe, *Oxonian in Thelemarken* (1858), vol. ii, p. 109; W. Williams, *Through Norway* (1859), p. 25; *Eclectic Review*, 1864, vol. i, p. 686; J. Bowden, *Norway* (1867), pp. 16, 24, 138.

⁶ R. Bremner, *Excursions* (1840), p. 20.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

Mr. Bremner would hardly tempt anybody to visit Norway, as little as would the geographical lesson-book, which at that time was well known in English seminaries, in which it was gravely stated that the Norwegians ate horse-flesh.¹ But Mr. Bremner's work does not call for serious attention: his observations are all superficial and his information without true foundation.² Yet even he would admit that though the lower ranks might be 'hasty and uncouth,' their superiors were 'extremely courteous and well-bred.'³ Other travellers 'also speak of the invariable civility and obligingness of the people, and of their remarkable politeness, which is said to 'extend lower among the ranks of society in the community than in other countries.'⁵ This they find illustrated by the high esteem in which filial respect is held by all Norwegians.⁶ Also kindness and goodwill are said to be universal: 'The Norwegians make amends for the want of comforts by the heartfelt kindness with which they receive us.'⁷ Among the peasants the traveller usually meets with great politeness: 'I have never received an incivility from any of the peasantry and generally when they heard I was an Englishman, they questioned me about my country.'⁸ Of great inconvenience to the traveller, however, is the *curiosity* to which their persons and belongings are exposed.

¹ See C. B. Elliott's *Letters* (1832), p. 144.

² In support of this opinion I quote the following passage from the *Monthly Review* (1840, p. 269): 'We do not at all discover that he had the means, took the pains, or that he possessed the qualities of a good authority upon those national features, which require research and a liberal construction of many attendant circumstances.'

³ R. Bremner, *Excursions* (1840), p. 48.

⁴ W. Breton, *Scandinavian Sketches* (1835), p. 197; W. Bilton, *Two Summers* (1840), i, p. 88; W. Williams, *Through Norway* (1859), p. 51.

⁵ S. Laing, *Journal of a Residence* (1836), p. 158.

⁶ E. Lowe, *Unprotected Females in Norway* (1857), p. 161; J. Bowden, *Norway* (1867), p. 41.

⁷ R. Everest, *A Journey through Norway* (1829), p. 143.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 207. Thus also X. and Y., *Long Vacation Ramble* (1857), pp. 61, 89.

The peasants are said to be highly inquisitive¹ and to exhibit 'inordinate wonderment and admiration at everything strange or new to them.'² Especially the ladies must submit to a minute examination of their wardrobe.³ Another nuisance, which the travellers are equally incapable of escaping from, is the *dirt*, which is said to reign in 'undisturbed supremacy' throughout the country.⁴ Reginald Heber alone praised the farm-houses for their 'remarkable neatness and cleanliness';⁵ while another traveller⁶ thought them so filthy as to be 'better calculated for the habitations of swine than of Christians.' Personal ablutions but seldom occur'; 'no Norwegian ever breathes more fresh air than he can help'⁶; he spits on the floor, and that even in polite society⁹; 'a large proportion of the Norwegian peasantry are a dirty race.'¹⁰ When the traveller arrives at a farmhouse, he steps into the main room, which is also used for a kitchen, the floor of which is sprinkled with juniper; he is given the cupboard of the household to sleep in, into which the hostess enters at will. The following is a vivid picture of the reception he may meet with:

'The dirty man having just finished his meal, gave me his knife, first sucking it clean, and making a bow as he presented it. . . . After supper I was shown into a dirty double-bedded room, the dirty man lying on his back smoking in the best bed of the two. The bed left for me was a kind of stout coffin, or egg-chest, with some straw

¹ W. Breton, *Scandinavian Sketches* (1835), p. 185.

² W. Bilton, *Two Summers* (1840), vol. i, p. 87.

³ Selina Bunbury, *Life in Sweden*, etc. (1853), i, p. 126; Emily Lowe, *Unprotected Females* (1857), p. 242.

⁴ *Eclectic Review* (1864), vol. i, p. 685.

⁵ *Life of Reginald Heber* (1830), p. 77.

⁶ W. Breton, *Scandinavian Sketches* (1835), p. 185.

⁷ J. Milford, *Norway* (1842), p. 131.

⁸ Rev. H. Newland, *Forest Scenes* (1854), p. 175.

⁹ *Meliora*, 1858, vol. i, p. 225; W. Williams, *Through Norway* (1859), p. 148.

¹⁰ W. Breton, *Scandinavian Sketches* (1835), p. 192.

covered with canvas for the mattress, and a dirty rug for the covering.' ¹

However, in spite of this reception the traveller is good enough to think that kindness was evident throughout; and that there was a true politeness in the act of the dirty man when he licked the knife so carefully: 'He knew that I should pay him nothing for licking the knife, but in doing so, he did his best, according to his notions, to make it luxuriously clean and agreeable to me.'

The life and the manners of *the peasants* are studied by the travellers with great interest, if not always with equal accuracy. This interest usually centres round the wedding-feasts, at which the men wear their national costumes with silver-buckled shoes and white stockings fastened at the knee with crimson ribands. The Norwegian popular dances, the Halling and 'the Polsk,' are frequently made the subject of observation and gave Dr. Clarke occasion for the following remarkable reflection: The Halling is

'undoubtedly the dance of Hippoclides, the Athenian, when contending with other rivals for the daughter of Clisthenes: namely, a dance in which the performer standing upon his head, kicks his heels about in the air as his hands. . . . The Polsk answers to the account which Herodotus gives of the Attic dance, performed to the Emmeleia, which by its indecency offended Clisthenes.' ²

In similar far-fetched comparisons the travellers rejoice, one of them even fancying he can trace a resemblance in the manners and customs of the people of Dovre to the ancient Greeks. ³

The travellers on their journeys through the country take great pleasure in hunting out curiosities. Dr. Clarke may be regarded as the most casual of all the writers. 'Go to Blocksberg,' he observes, is a Norwegian expression for 'Go to the devil,' and strangely enough the

¹ W. Williams, *Through Norway* (1859), pp. 44-7.

² Clarke's *Travels* (1819), sect. i, p. 613. For another account of these dances see Capell Brooke's *Travels* (1823), pp. 130-1.

³ Everest's *Journey* (1829), p. 51.

German peasants dwelling near the same Blocksberg use a similar term for the same purpose: 'Go to Hekkenfjeld,' which is a mountain in Norway! ¹ That a collector of such curiosities should not always be very particular about the accuracy of his statements is perhaps not very surprising. 'Gammel-Ost,' in Norwegian meaning 'old cheese,' alters its form and sense to 'Gammel Orse' or 'Norske,' which means 'old Norwegian.' ¹ Unfamiliarity with the Norwegian language frequently leads the travellers into the most ludicrous mistakes. Most authors have a peculiar fondness for quoting Norwegian phrases—for what purpose it is difficult to conceive, as the phrases appear almost as incomprehensible to a Norwegian as to an Englishman. Reginald Heber in a private letter ² at some length points out the etymological resemblances between the Norwegian language and the Yorkshire dialect. But when the Bishop of Calcutta among other terms mentions phrases as 'bra bairn' and 'skort simmer,' it is to be doubted whether any Norwegian would succeed in discovering the secret meaning of these mysterious words—at least scarcely without having access to a dictionary of the Yorkshire dialect.

The peasants are usually described as fine-looking fellows—hardy sons of the soil, 'honest, thrifty, and industrious.' ³ They are universally good-natured, healthy, and content with their existence.⁴ They are said to be gifted with much intelligence and frequently disposed to be witty.⁵ But they are slow and have 'not a particle of go in them.' ⁶ It is in vain to speak to them of improvements or tell them how things are managed in other countries: they

¹ Clarke's *Travels* (1819), sect. i, p. 668.

² Letter to Richard Heber, Esq., *Heber's Life* (1830), p. 83.

³ J. Bowden, *Norway* (1867), p. 141.

⁴ X. and Y., *Long Vacation Ramble* (1857), pp. 34, 81; E. Lowe, *Unprotected Females* (1857), p. 192.

⁵ Barrow's *Excursions* (1834), p. 268.

⁶ Metcalfe, *Oxonian in Norway* (1856), p. 48. Thus also Bilton, *Two Summers* (1840), i, p. 87.

will say, 'O yes, such things may do well in other countries, but they will never do in Norway.'¹ On crossing the frontier between Norway and Sweden, Capell Brooke was aware that 'already was the humility and courteous disposition of the Swede exchanged for the freer, bolder manner of the Norwegian.'² But also the Norwegian peasant can be shy and slow to make advances.³ Yet they gain in proportion as they are known.⁴ They are complimented on their high-mindedness as the Spaniards of the North. They have 'never like the Swede, the Dane, the Russian or the German crouched beneath the cudgel of the feudal baron bailiff.'⁵ They are highly educated, for the 'real education of the human mind is to be found . . . in the possession of property.'⁶ They are endowed with a free and independent spirit and are great lovers of liberty⁷: "Drunk or sober, sad or cheerful, the independence of their country is the Norwegian's first and dearest theme."⁸ 'Let "Gamle Norge" be the toast in Norway, and every Norwegian starts to his feet and a burst of enthusiasm follows, which no circumstances have power to restrain.'⁹

The peasants are by most travellers regarded as the muscle and bone of the Norwegian people, and only a very few writers bestow an equal praise on the inhabitants of the towns. Coleridge, when he spoke of Norway as a country that, if brought to maintain a million more of inhabitants, 'would be ἀνταρκής and impregnable,' took care to state that he did not include the people of the sea-

¹ Derwent Conway, *Personal Narrative* (1829), p. 101.

² Capell Brooke's *Travels* (1823), p. 70.

³ *New Quarterly Review*, 1857, pp. 332-4.

⁴ *National Review*, January 1863; J. Bowden, *Norway* (1867), p. 28.

⁵ S. Laing, *Journal of a Residence* (1836), p. 231.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁷ T. Forester, *Norway* (1850), pp. 452, 453; X. and Y., *Long Vacation Ramble* (1857), p. 146.

⁸ R. Bremner, *Excursions* (1840), p. 34.

⁹ Derwent Conway, *Personal Narrative* (1829), p. 40.

ports in his praise of the Norwegians.¹ And most of the Englishmen who wrote about Norway during the nineteenth century were similarly unfair to the urban element of the Norwegian race. This was probably in the first instance due to the fact that only the minority of travellers had any intercourse with the society of the towns. Their interest was almost exclusively concerned with the people of the country. Yet such travellers who mixed with *the upper classes*, generally confessed to a sympathetic praise of their character, representing them as courteous, unassuming, and dignified.² Simplicity of customs united with great ease and comfort is said to distinguish their social surroundings.³ Yet there is a lack of refinement: 'It is not considered a breach of good manners to put one's knife into one's mouth and you may afterwards help yourself to salt with it.'⁴ When the dinner is finished, the guests put their chairs back against the wall, and each shakes hands with the host and expresses his gratitude for the meal eaten. Eating and drinking are judged to be of infinitely too great an importance in Norway: 'Eating, it is true, forms the main part of a Norwegian's daily thoughts; the word "mad" (meat, food) is everlastingly in their mouths and the thing itself almost as frequently.'⁵ The ladies eat and drink quite as much as the gentlemen.⁶ During the meals everybody is too busily occupied in eating and drinking to attend to what his neighbour is doing.⁷ The inhabitants of the towns are said to know thoroughly how to enjoy themselves,⁸ the great fun during the winter being a cavalcade on the ice.

¹ Coleridge, *Table Talk* (January 3, 1834).

² Williams, *Through Norway* (1859), p. 72.

³ Bilton, *Two Summers* (1840), i, p. 192.

⁴ Bowden, *Norway* (1867), p. 39.

⁵ Metcalfe, *Oxonian in Thelemarken* (1858). Thus also Bilton, *Two Summers* (1840), ii, p. 222.

⁶ Bowden, *Norway* (1867), p. 27.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

However, there is said to be a want of proper *moral feeling* in Norwegian society. Thus the law of divorce is judged to be far too lax, one traveller¹ telling the story of a husband who attended the second wedding of his wife and was afterwards a regular visitor at her new home. On the whole the moral life of the Norwegians, according to these travellers, has many black spots. The Rev. Henry Newland believed no country in the world to have such a low standard of popular morality.² In far-off places children are said to be baptized with beer, soup, and even with spittle.³ In some counties we are told that to every hundred marriages there are ninety-two illegal liaisons producing children among the men and eighty-five among the women,⁴ a Norwegian woman not being punished unless her illegitimate children be more than three in number.⁵ Only in far-off places idyllic conditions may still exist. It was of such a district Derwent Conway⁶ wrote that there was scarcely a tradition of murder, that thefts were infrequent, and that no illegitimate child had been born in the parish for more than seven years. Another traveller⁷ believed that no instance of violence being offered to the lonely shepherdesses had ever occurred, and felt convinced that the moral sentiments of the peasants were pure: 'no foul idea harbours in their bosoms,' he wrote; 'they are in act and thought as chaste as their own icicles.'

But if the travellers found faults with the moral standard of a certain part of the Norwegian people, they nearly all bore favourable testimony to their universal openness of heart and their genuine benevolence and affection:

¹ Bowden, *Norway* (1867), p. 55.

² Rev. H. Newland, *Forest Scenes* (1854), p. 174.

³ Bowden, *Norway* (1867), p. 136.

⁴ *Meliora* (1858), i, p. 211. Thus also R. Bremner, *Excursions* (1840), p. 79.

⁵ Bowden, *Norway* (1867), p. 117.

⁶ Derwent Conway, *Personal Narrative* (1829), p. 67.

⁷ Milford, *Norway* (1842), pp. 81, 132.

‘The climate may be cold, but warm hearts dwell beneath a chilly sky.’¹

The members of the *Storthing* are said to be singularly conscious of the gravity of their task. When Derwent Conway visited the country, the peasants were still wearing their national costumes, and the English author refers to their ‘ludicrous appearance’ as not being ‘superior to that collected at a second-rate cattle-show in England, but infinitely more grotesque.’² However, it was that ‘patriarchal simplicity’ that caused the Rev. Robert Everest to question if ‘the senators of poor and virtuous Rome were not somewhat such men as these?’³

The accounts of the later travellers are commonly sympathetic. Barrow⁴ never saw ‘an assembly of men more strongly wear the appearance of sages.’ ‘They tell a tale of days once known in England before the progress of luxury had introduced abuses.’⁵ Even Mr. Bremner was struck by their ‘honest-looking, unpretending appearance,’⁶ and Mr. Forester likewise praises their ‘dignified simplicity.’⁷ The peasants are, however, considered unequal to taking an enlarged view of state politics: ‘They notoriously resist, as far as they can, all expenditure of public money, and where two sums are proposed, invariably vote for the lowest.’⁸ The enthusiasm which the early travellers frequently expressed for the members of this institution rapidly cooled down, and in 1867 a traveller⁹ speaks with a not wholly unjust contempt of their ‘heavy, determined countenances,’ their ‘bullet-shaped heads,’ their ‘studied slovenliness of dress,’ and their ‘loud, arrogant, and vulgar voices.’

¹ Milford, *Norway* (1842), p. 294.

² Derwent Conway, *Personal Narrative* (1829), p. 142.

³ Everest’s *Journey* (1829), p. 16.

⁴ Barrow’s *Excursions* (1834), p. 214.

⁵ Elliott’s *Letters* (1832), p. 190.

⁶ Bremner’s *Excursion* (1840), p. 45.

⁷ T. Forester, *Norway* (1850), p. 414.

⁸ Bilton, *Two Summers* (1840), i, p. 284.

⁹ J. Bowden, *Norway* (1867), p. 116.

During the earlier part of the century the travellers frequently speak of the many instances of dark superstition prevalent among the peasantry.¹ But as for the ordinary *education* in Norway, they nearly all declare it to be good, as every man all over the country has learned to read and write.² Only the higher standard is attained with more difficulty, this being due to the great expense of maintaining a young man at the University.³ Here the examinations are said to be so numerous that the professors scarcely get time to lecture. As for the state of learning, 'the average of their scholarship may be low, but on matters of geography, history, etc., they are more than completely informed.'⁴ The university men are naturally considered inferior to those of England 'in tone of character, gentlemanly bearing and knowledge of the world.'⁵ But the professors are said to be very learned men.⁶ It is, however, hard to believe the reliability of Mr. Bremner's statement that degrees below the rank of doctor of philosophy are seldom conferred.⁷ This is a compliment which, though highly creditable (being paid by a writer who does not usually overload his work with terms of adulation), must be regretfully declined.

As for Norwegian *theatres*, they were during the first half of the century conducted by Danes, but when referred to, they are generally admitted to be good and the interest which the Norwegian public was taking in theatrical performances is pointed out with some astonishment.⁸ A

¹ See especially Derwent Conway, *Personal Narrative* (1829), pp. 221-39.

² 'They are better educated and instructed than the peasantry of England' (*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, March 1859).

³ S. Laing, *Journal of a Residence* (1836), p. 445.

⁴ Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians* (1840).

⁵ Bowden, *Norway* (1867), p. 70.

⁶ Forester, *Norway* (1850), pp. 89-90; Bowden, *Norway* (1867), p. 69.

⁷ Bremner's *Excursions* (1840), p. 56.

⁸ 'The theatre . . . seems to be considered as a necessary appendage to most towns in Norway' (*Milford, Norway* [1842], p. 17).

curious explanation is given by Mr. Laing,¹ who thought it to be 'a proof of only a moderate advance in mental culture among a people, when their theatres are very flourishing'; 'It is in Italy, in Austria, in Denmark, in Norway,' he remarks, 'that theatres are well attended, and not generally in England, Scotland or France,'—which at its best seems a rather easy and cheap way of explaining away the English neglect of the stage.

The plays which were most frequently acted were French, German, or Danish. Mr. Latham, however, relates that he attended the performance of an adapted English comedy, viz. *Charles II*, 'the title of which for some mysterious reason was changed to that of the *Youth of Henry V*.'² At Kristiansand another traveller was present at a performance of one of the tragedies of Shakespeare.³

Great attention is paid to the *newspapers* and *periodical literature* of the country. Mr. Laing is full of praise of the liberty of the press, which yet does not allow any neglect or abuse to pass unseen or unnoticed: 'Such newspapers as the American people read would not find editors or readers in this country. The people are advanced beyond that state. . . . This sound state of the public mind and of the press may be ascribed in a great measure to the influence of the leading newspapers.'⁴ The *Morgenblad* is the leading paper: 'in paper and type this journal is superior to any French or German one that I have seen, and its articles of foreign news and its editorial paragraphs are often written with great ability.'⁵

No less appreciation is bestowed upon the periodical publications, which, according to Mr. Laing, prove 'a state of education among the people which is far from being limited.'⁶ They are literary journals, antiquarian, topo-

¹ Laing, *Journal of a Residence* (1836), p. 141.

² Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians* (1840), i, p. 38.

³ Milford, *Norway* (1842), p. 7.

⁴ Laing, *Journal of a Residence* (1836), pp. 134–5.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 443.

graphical, medical, historical—in fact, so numerous that Mr. Bremner thinks the country to ‘languish under an excess of periodical cropping.’ This fact he declares to be the cause of the low state of the literature of the country: ‘It will always be found that where periodical literature flourishes to an excessive degree, national literature declines.’¹

Among all these books of travel the only work which claims a higher rank is that of Samuel Laing, *A Journal of a Residence in Norway during the years 1834, 1835, and 1836.*² His stay in Norway is the only one which actually was made ‘with a view to inquire into the moral and political economy of the country and the conditions of its inhabitants.’ His book contains ample information on statistics, domestic and agricultural economy, ecclesiastical and legal administration, the manners and morals of the population and the system of its education. All this is supplemented by historical glimpses and natural descriptions. Several quotations have already been given in the preceding pages. In many respects his observations are of great value and his statements almost invariably correct. His sympathy with the Norwegians is based on a thorough knowledge of their national character, and his admiration for the political constitution is greater than generally would be expected of a foreigner: ‘I consider the Norwegian Storthing as a working model of a constitutional government on a small scale.’³ It is, however, strange that he should make such a capital blunder as to believe May 17, 1814, to be the day when ‘the Norwegian nation and the Swedish king solemnly

¹ Bremner’s *Excursions* (1840), p. 62–3. In his book Mr. Latham gives a list of sixteen newspapers and periodicals which appeared at Christiania in 1833, with the changes taking place up to 1839 (Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians*, ii, p. 185).

² Reviewed by the *Edinburgh Review*, 1837; by the *Westminster Review*, 1837; by the *Dublin University Magazine*, 1837; by the *Dublin Review*, 1843.

³ Laing’s *Journal of a Residence* (1836), p. 450.

entered into the compact under the guarantee of the allied powers'—his knowledge of historical facts being otherwise without defects.

In one point Mr. Laing differs considerably from the views taken by all Norwegians. He thinks that the Russian Government, in paternal care for its huge multitude of subjects, has a right when the proper moment arrives to seize on Norway. That Norway was exposed to such a danger from Russia had already been pointed out in England by the *Quarterly Review* for April 1814, where it was thought likely that in a short time the Russians would acquire complete possession of Finmarken and compel the Norwegians to confine themselves to Nordland. Mr. Laing's views are strongly replied to by the *Westminster Review* (April 1837), which says that 'the paternal care of Russia for the multitude in question is pure imagination,' and that 'this is not a power for which the free kingdom of Norway ought to be sacrificed.' A later writer goes still further, anticipating a Russian descent on Scotland if the Czar got hold of a Norwegian harbour.²

In his book Mr. Laing states that the Norwegian trade with England at this time was in decline, and like other writers he strongly complains of the English tax on timber, which he calls 'the most pernicious duty perhaps in the whole range of British taxation.'³

¹ Laing, *Journal of a Residence* (1836), p. 478.

² Metcalfe, *Oxonian in Norway* (1856), p. 300.

³ Laing's *Journal of a Residence* (1836), pp. 41-4.

On the same subject the *Penny Magazine* for September 21, 1839, writes: 'We prefer, however, to encourage the importation of Canadian timber, though neither in size, strength nor durability is it so well adapted for building purposes [as the Norwegian timber]. Thus we divert the industry of Canada from its agricultural resources, diminish the comfort, and repress the course of refinement amongst the Norwegian people, and deprive the working classes of England of decent and comfortable habitations.'

The timber tax is likewise criticized by Mr. Elliott (*Letters* [1832], p. 193), Sir Arthur de Capell Brooke (*Travels* [1823], p. 92), L. Lloyd (*Field Sports* [1830], ii, pp. 275-80), the *Westminster Review* (April 1837), and T. Forester (*Norway* [1850], p. 456).

To the English traveller Norway is in the first instance an object of interest as the home of his Viking ancestors.¹ 'All our special English characteristics,' one traveller writes,² 'are even more visible in Norway than in England.' 'Much of the simplicity that characterized our forefathers is still existing there. We are Aladdined to the England of three centuries ago.'³ 'The family room is what we may fancy the hall to have been in an English manor house in Queen Elizabeth's days.'⁴ 'Old ballads pasted on the wall, story books of witches and giants . . . carry us back to the golden days of good Queen Bess.'⁵ In the towns the English traveller is constantly reminded of his native country: 'Any alteration that takes place in London with regard to dress is instantly transmitted to Christiania.'⁶ In Bergen 'dandies may be seen with clothes of the cut Parisian or dressed à l'Anglaise.'⁷ Here the English are said to be lords and masters and all they do to be imitated at once.⁸ The homes are furnished with English engravings and English newspapers are lying upon the tables.⁹ Mr. Latham states that about the year 1840 thirteen copies of the English *Penny Magazine* were sold weekly at Christiania,¹⁰ and that in the *Athenaeum* reading-room the traveller would find the *Times* and the *Chronicle*, the *Quarterly*, *Foreign Quarterly*, and *Edinburgh Reviews*—'not unstudied—at least not uncut.'¹¹

¹ Cf. *Meliora*, 1858, p. 211. Milford, *Norway* (1842), p. 313, and the *Retrospective Review*, May 1854.

² Williams, *Through Norway* (1859), p. 327.

³ Metcalfe, *Oxonian in Thelemarken* (1858), vii. Thus also Bilton, *Two Summers* (1840), i, p. 89; Milford, *Norway* (1842), p. 314; *National Review*, January 1863, p. 140.

⁴ Laing's *Journal of a Residence* (1836), p. 157.

⁵ Clarke's *Travels* (1819), sect. i, p. 713.

⁶ *Ibid.*, sect. ii (1823), p. 75.

⁷ Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians* (1840), i, p. 79.

⁸ E. Lowe, *Unprotected Females* (1857), p. 154.

⁹ Clarke's *Travels* (1819), sect. i, p. 667.

¹⁰ Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians* (1840), i, p. 158.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, i, p. 32. Miss Lowe, writing in 1857, mentions the *Times*, *Athenaeum*, *Examiner*, and *Illustrated London News* among the

Though the Norwegians for a long time were not familiar with English literature, they were particularly interested in British affairs in general.¹ Yet Dr. Clarke mentions that Bernt Anker was familiarly acquainted with the best English authors in almost every department of science²; and Mr. Metcalfe³ relates two curious instances of Norwegian acquaintance with English literature: a peasant preacher whom he met in the country spoke enthusiastically to him of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and a priest of the district of Hørningdal, who was very fond of English language and literature, possessed the whole of the works of Sir Walter Scott, his admiration for the said author having borne its fruit in a handsome tribute to the British poet in the christening of his son by the name of the Scottish bard.

Later in the century the knowledge of English literature in Norway increased, and Mr. Bowden, writing in 1867, states the educated Norwegians to be familiar with Shakespeare, Milton, and Goldsmith, as well as with the works of the great novelists.⁴

The peasants, also, it seems, were great admirers of the British. Barrow tells us that he was asked by one of them to what country he belonged, adding that 'as he had invariably remarked to be the case,' the peasant appeared to be much pleased on being informed that he was an Englishman.⁵ This is also confirmed by Mr. Williams, when informing us that the peasants of Hardanger took off their hats and stood uncovered when he told them he was an Englishman.⁶

English papers at the same club. Also Mr. Bowden remarks that most English papers and periodicals may be found at Christiania (Norway [1867], p. 173).

¹ See Williams, *Through Norway* (1859), p. 16.

² Clarke's *Travels*, sect. ii (1823), p. 76. See also Coxe's *Travels* (1792), in *Pinkerton's Voyages*, etc., vol. vi (1809), p. 365.

³ Metcalfe, *Oxonian in Norway* (1856), pp. 46, 234.

⁴ Bowden, *Norway* (1867), p. 172.

⁵ Barrow's *Excursions* (1834), p. 267. Cf. also Bowden, *Norway* (1867), p. 139.

⁶ Williams, *Through Norway* (1859), p. 260.

The English language was generally spoken among the higher classes.¹ Young Norwegians from fifteen to eighteen years old were often educated in London—not, however, in the best society, and their imitations of English manners are said frequently to show an ‘affectation of dash with very little good taste.’² Thus Reginald Heber³ noticed at Christiania ‘an endeavour—though generally a fruitless one—to imitate English manners.’

In society, English manners were in vogue during the first half of the century, and the connexion with England was greater than with any other country. Mr. Anker used to send all the linen of his family annually to London to be washed.⁴ Dr. Clarke relates that “the welfare of Great Britain” was a toast which resounded in every company and was never given but with reiterated cheers and the most heartfelt transports. Every Englishman was considered by the Norwegians as a brother; they partook even of our prejudices and participated in all our triumphs. . . . They sang “Rule Britannia” in every company.’⁵ No wonder that the traveller felt himself at home among a nation bearing so much resemblance to his own and displaying feelings of sincere sympathy to an extent which could hardly have been surpassed if the country had been a British colony and not an independent kingdom.

It is true that this admiration for the English was particularly remarkable at the beginning of the century, and that its expressions became later somewhat less striking. But if the instances of outward exhibition of feeling decreased, there is no reason to believe that this was due to any weakening of the sympathies of the people. Mr. Bowden cannot have known what he advanced, when he declared that the Norwegians had a disagreeable habit

¹ Barrow's *Excursions* (1834), p. 216.

² *The Life of Reginald Heber* (1830), p. 58.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁴ Clarke's *Travels*, sect. ii (1823), p. 15.

⁵ *Ibid.*, sect. i (1819), p. 666.

of abusing England.¹ All other travellers unanimously testify to a most sincere affection :

‘ Ungrateful, indeed, should I be, if I did not add my humble testimony . . . of the admiration and affection they universally expressed towards my country. . . . In Norway more especially will he (i.e. the Englishman) be made aware of the universal conviction of the people, that England is the Palladium of their liberty and independence.’²

Mr. Bremner, writing in 1840, says that the visitors’ book going back twelve or fifteen years showed him the increasing interest Englishmen were taking in Norway³; and Mr. Latham, writing in the same year, tells us that the first person he spoke to on landing was an Englishman, the first person he saw in the billiard-room was an Englishman, the first three names he saw on the list of the hotel were those of Englishmen, and when he spoke German to the landlord he answered him in English.⁴

Norwegian sympathy for England is reciprocated by most of the British travellers : ‘ England should think well of Norway, for Norway thinks well of England ’⁵; and ‘ An Englishman who receives hospitality in Norway has more than common cause for gratitude, because Norway owes nothing to his country.’⁶

On their leaving the country, the travellers express deep regret. Barrow thinks it of all countries only inferior to England⁷; and the Rev. Robert Everest writes : ‘ No one ever left Norway without regret. It is a country in many parts of which a child might walk about with a bag of gold and no one molest it—where a stranger by day or by night might knock at any door he comes to and be

¹ Bowden, *Norway* (1867), p. 35.

² Bilton, *Two Summers* (1840), ii, pp. 217–18. Thus also Milford, *Norway* (1842), p. 28, and the *Eclectic Review*, 1864, p. 686.

³ Bremner’s *Excursions*, p. 129.

⁴ Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians* (1840), i, p. 32.

⁵ *Ibid.*, i, p. 54.

⁶ Derwent Conway, *Personal Narrative* (1829), p. 144.

⁷ Barrow’s *Excursions* (1834), p. 377.

welcome.’¹ Thus also Mr. Elliott: ‘It was with deep regret that I quitted Norway, the Switzerland and Liliputian Himala of the North’²; and the Rev. Frederick Metcalfe: ‘We had only one regret—I can’t help expressing it. It was that we were no longer in Scandinavia.’³

We have in the preceding pages tried roughly to trace the travellers’ accounts of Norwegian life and character up to the year 1870. To come beyond that date would be to enter into a subject too remote from our present purposes. The books written during the remainder of the century add but little new matter respecting the character and life of the people, and are—to a large extent—chiefly concerned with questions of sport. As for the population of the country, it must be regretfully stated that the sympathy once so keenly felt for its national character in many instances shows a distinct falling-off. It would in this connexion be unfair not to admit that in the development of the Norwegian community there have been many aspects which could not fail to appear unsympathetic to an English mind.

When the attempt was first made in Norway to force upon the population a commixture of rural dialects, the *Saturday Review* wrote (January 19, 1889):

‘We may ask ourselves by what irony of provincialism these few hundreds of thousands of persons . . . have been persuaded to render even narrower than it must inevitably be, the circle of their interests and the range of their touch with Europe? . . . It would be crazy in a large country, is it less than suicidal in a small one?’

The English interest in Norway had originated in a wish to study the character of a people resembling their own, and had been sustained in the hope of finding the Viking spirit still breathing under a democratic constitution. Many were the cases in which this hope met with a general

¹ Everest’s *Journey* (1829), p. 257.

² Elliott’s *Letters* (1832), p. 199.

³ Metcalfe’s *Oxonian in Norway* (1856), vol. ii, p. 373.

disappointment. Already in 1874 Mr. Gosse had pointed out that the cultivated classes had 'much need of circumspection and prudence, if they will not permit the majority to drag them down into ruin.'¹ Only eleven years later Mr. Archer could declare that he 'sighed for the good old unsophisticated Norway of twenty years ago.'²

¹ *Fraser's Magazine*, February 1874.

² *Fortnightly Review*, September 1885.

CHAPTER IV

NORWAY AND THE NORWEGIANS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

IN English literature before the nineteenth century Norway stands for little more than a geographical notion, connected with some more or less vague ideas of the peculiarities of the country. To express the huge size of Satan's spear, Milton borrowed a picture from Norwegian scenery :

‘ His Spear, to equal which the tallest Pine
Hewn on *Norwegian* hills, to be the Mast
Of some great Ammiral, were but a wand.’

(*Paradise Lost*, i, 293-5.)

To this picture was sometimes added an air of legendary mystery. Milton again speaks of the sea-beast, Leviathan, as :

‘ Haply slumbering on the Norway foam.’¹

The character of the population was often associated with a daring spirit and a ferocious strength. When Merlin in *The Faerie Queene* unveils to Britomart the fate of her progeny, he speaks of Great Gormond, who ‘ like a swift otter ’—

‘ Shall ouerswim the sea with many one
Of his Norueyses, to assist the Britons fone ’ ;

and this is how he depicts the foray :

‘ He in his furie all shall ouerrunne,
And holy Church with faithlesse hands deface,

¹ *Paradise Lost*, i, 203. The *Retrospective Review* for 1826 (p. 210, note) maintains that this line was suggested by the reading of Olaus Magnus, who died 1544.

That thy sad people vtterly fordonne,
 Shall to the vtmost mountaines fly apace :
 Was neuer so great wast in any place,
 Nor so fowle outrage doen by liuing men :
 For all thy Cities they shall sacke and race,
 And the greene grasse, that groweth, they shall bren,
 That euen the wild beast shall dy in starued den.' ¹

Shakespeare in two of his tragedies makes Norway the invading enemy, from whom the danger is threatening.

' . . . the Norweyan banners flout the sky
 And fan our people cold,'

Ross says in *Macbeth*. Only on the heroes of the play the Norwegian armies fail to make the same terrifying impression, and when King Duncan asks if the sight of them has not dismayed his captains Macbeth and Banquo, the reply is :

' Yes,
 As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.'

However, to attach any importance to the descriptions of Norwegian character occurring in *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, or from them to draw a conclusion as to Shakespeare's own view of the subject, would be obviously ridiculous. And yet it has been done. In order to prove the alleged lawless and treacherous spirit of the Norwegians, the Swedish minister in London in 1814, in a pamphlet called *Réflexions sur l'état actuel de la Norvège*, quoted the following speech of Horatio :

' . . . young Fortinbras,
 Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
 Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
 Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute
 . . . to recover of us, by strong hand
 And terms compulsative, those foresaid lands
 So by his father lost . . . '

In *The Politician*, a tragedy written by James Shirley

¹ Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene* (1590), bk. iii, canto iii, 33, 34.

and acted at Salisbury Court about 1639,¹ the scene is laid in Norway. This play, which in more than one respect recalls the milieu of *Hamlet*, contains more intrigue and foul plots than are likely to have taken place even in the darkest ages of northern barbarity.²

All these references to Norway and the Norwegians were more or less accidental and were not caused by any special interest in the country or its population.

Allusions of a different kind may be met with in Scottish nursery-stories³ and ballads. In some cases the ballads may have been founded on some sort of historic tradition. Thus 'Hardyknute' was at one time believed to be a contemporary description of events connected with King Haco's invasion of Scotland (1263):

'The King of Norse, in summer pride,
Puffed up with power and might,
Landed in fair Scotland, the isle,
With many a hardy knight.'

Likewise Bishop Percy took the often-quoted ballad of Sir Patrick Spens to be an historical narrative:

'To Noroway, to Noroway,
To Noroway o'er the faem;
The king's daughter o' Noroway,
'Tis thou must bring her hame.'

Both these ballads are, however, now believed to have

¹ Not printed till 1655.

² Marpisa, the queen, a 'proud, subtle, and revengeful lady,' has a son by her first marriage, 'of a sweet and noble disposition,' whose soul is wrecked by the intrigues of 'the Politician,' a man who in his person embodies both the hypocrisy of Polonius and the villany of Claudius. 'Where shall I hide my life?' Harold exclaims. 'I must no more converse with men' (act ii, sc. i). [Cf. *Hamlet*: 'Man delights not me, no, nor woman neither' (act ii, sc. ii).] Ultimately he dies from drinking, whereupon a fellow who had joined him in his cups is hanged, and the deaths of all the villains of the play follow. In the character of Turgesius, the prince, there are traits that recall the figure of Fortinbras.

³ 'The Black Bull of Noroway,' 'The Red Bull of Noroway.' (See R. Chambers, *Popular Rhymes of Scotland*.)

been written during the earlier part of the eighteenth century and to be the work of Lady Wardlaw of Pitreavie (d. 1727) or some of her friends.¹

A really demonstrable interest in Norway was not developed in England till late in the eighteenth century, when poets at the time of the Romantic movement, through an increasing fondness for old Norse subjects,² were led also to touch on contemporary life in the Northern countries. Thus we find Norway sometimes made the scene of a romantic poem, as, for instance, in Peter Bayley's poem about the Norwegian hunter, who—

‘ Brav’d the keen blast and drifts snow,
To chase the elk and bounding roe.
At eve, fatigued, he quits the plain
And seeks his peaceful cot again,
Bethinks him of the fire that burns
To cheer his home when he returns.’³

In Anne Bannerman's sonnet ‘The Norwegian’⁴ we have another instance of the romantic temperament's predilection for the land of the North :

‘ When doubtful twilight dims the polar moon,
And rays, reflected from the mountains, glow
Against the rising of the winter moon,
The cold Norwegian from involving snow
Clears his frail bark : and when the first faint ray
Shines on the billow's ice-encumber'd foam,
Fearless he launches on his trackless way,
And on the stormy ocean hails his home.’ . . .

¹ See Robert Chambers, *The Romantic Scottish Ballads* (1859), especially pp. 7–10.

[In a preface to *Popular Rhymes of Scotland* (later ed.), Mr. Chambers remarks: ‘I am now sensible of having pressed the claims of Lady Wardlaw too exclusively; it is more probable that several persons were engaged in this task throughout the eighteenth century.’]

See also S. B. Hustvedt, *Ballad Criticism in Scandinavia and Great Britain in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1916).

² See pt. ii, ch. i.

³ Peter Bayley, Junr., Esq., *Poems* (1803) [‘The Norwegian Hunter’].

⁴ *Poems* by Anne Bannerman (Edinburgh, 1800).

A certain fondness for Norwegian landscape was likewise displayed by the great English poets of the first half of the nineteenth century, with whom scattered references to Norwegian scenery are not seldom to be found. Thus Wordsworth writes of :

‘ . . . hymns that soothe with graver sound
The gulfy coast of Norway iron-bound.’¹

And Shelley, in his ‘Lines written amongst the Euganean Hills,’ gives another reference to Norwegian landscape :

‘ As the Norway woodman quells,
In the depth of piny dells,
One light flame among the brakes,
While the boundless forest shakes,
And its mighty trunks are torn
By the fire thus lowly born :
The spark beneath his feet is dead,
He starts to see the flames it fed
Howling through the darkened sky
With a myriad tongues victoriously.’

In *The Revolt of Islam* (1817) there is a picture of a woman who—

‘ . . . trembled like one aspen pale
Among the gloomy pines of a Norwegian vale.’
(canto xii, vi.)

Campbell, in his ‘Ode to Winter,’ speaks of the winter as retiring—

‘ With barren darkness by his side,
Round the shore where loud Lofoden
Whirls to death the roaring whale.’

In ‘The Princess’ Tennyson has the following lines about Norway :

‘ . . . I was one
To whom the touch of all mischance but came
As night to him that sitting on a hill
Sees the midsummer, midnight, Norway sun
Set into sunrise. . . .’

(‘The Princess,’ iv.)

¹ *Evening Voluntaries*, iii, ‘By the Seaside.’

But apart from this vague interest in Norwegian landscape, English poets have seldom looked to modern Norway for poetical subjects. The reason is obviously to be found in the fact that so few great English poets have ever visited Norway.¹ And poetical inspiration does not arise from the mere sight of advertising picture cards—any more than from listening to the conversation of a drawing-room. The English poets at the beginning of the nineteenth century went to Switzerland and Italy, and Italy and Switzerland had the enviable fortune to be glorified by their singing muses. To Norway came the tourists, and a host of books of travel was the literary outcome of their visits. Some who were not wise enough to abstain from lyrical outbursts did, indeed, enrich the world with some poetical accounts of trout-fishing in a mountain valley or a description of the North Sea bursting against the rocky cliffs of the western coast. It is with regret that these efforts must be declared devoid of all poetical value, and, in fact, they do not speak highly in favour of Norway as a source of lyrical inspiration. The following may serve as a fair specimen of the average type :

‘ Go and suspend thy lyre in some lone cave
On the stern, rugged shore of Northern Sea,
Where but the wild bird’s wailings o’er the wave,
The storm’s harsh roar, the calm’s monotony
Can thrill its strings . . . ’²

¹ In 1883 Tennyson joined Gladstone’s party on a cruise to Norway. In 1885 Gladstone visited Norway a second time. (See Lady Brassey’s diary of the cruise in the *Contemporary Review*, October 1885.) Gladstone’s sympathy for Norway can be seen from a touching letter he wrote to his Norwegian pilot: ‘ . . . I do not know whether in any foreign land I ever felt so much at home as in Norway. But what touched and pleased me most of all was the universal kindness of the people and their interest in our progress ’ (V. Olsvig, *Det store vendepunkt i Holbergs liv*. pp. 93–4).

In 1896 William Morris made a voyage to Norway. He was, however, then already a broken man, and died during the course of the same year.

² Robert Mason Laing, *Hours in Norway: Poems* (London, 1841 [‘ Stanzas ’]).

One cannot help feeling sorry for the poet in the 'lone cave' that he should succeed so badly, though one may be sure that the storm's 'harsh roar' did its very best to shake the strings of his unwilling lyre! Here are some lines from 'The Scald's Farewell'¹:

'Farewell, proud pines that stately grow,
The loftiest on the rockiest hill;
As noblest minds 'mid worldly woe
Rising supreme o'er worldly ill!'

Mr. William Stigant, in a poem 'The Northern Muse,'² unveils himself as an admiring imitator of Goethe's 'Der Fischer' and Heine's 'Lorelei.' The muse sings, and—

'Then the fisherboy leans from out his boat
And the fish within the sea
Draw near to her feet, and motionless float
Entranced by her melody.'

It is not necessary to dwell any longer on these contributions, from which more quotations might easily be given.³ They all are in the same style, and besides failing to establish the most modest claim to rank as descriptive poetry, do not even possess the merit of imparting an interesting impression of the subject itself.

More interesting, or at any rate more amusing, is the account of the country and its population contained in novels and short stories.⁴ As a rule, the author or the authoress—for the great majority of the writers will be found to be women—had travelled in Norway as a

¹ Robert Mason Laing, *Hours in Norway: Poems* (London, 1841 ['Stanzas']).

² In *Temple Bar*, 1861, vol. i, pp. 34–8.

³ To mention a few: George Gilfillan, *Romsdal*; Felicia Hemans, 'Old Norway' (in *Misc. Lyrics*, 1834); six 'Norwegian Sonnets' by J. Logie Robertson (appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*, June 1881).

Many descriptive poems on Norwegian scenery were written by Bayard Taylor, the American poet.

⁴ See Appendix B.

tourist and put down the gathered impressions and observations in a note-book.¹ The notes thus collected, together with the adoption of some conventional plot, formed the material for some future story, usually given out to represent 'Norwegian peasant-life,' or 'life in the land of the midnight-sun.' Others who did not found their impressions on personal observations satisfied themselves by deriving them from a more or less casual study of some book of travel.²

The authors who deal with Norwegian peasant-life distinguish themselves by a marked predilection for dwelling on the credulities and superstitions of the population. They invariably delight in endeavouring to make the most of old legends and narratives in order to convey to their work an air of historic tradition. Thus we read how 'Nipen' (= Nissen?) or 'Nevitfotad' (?) is expected to come every Christmas Day to eat his share of the porridge, and how every accident or mishap is believed to

¹ This was the method of Edna Lyall.

² Such was the case of Harriet Martineau's book for children, called *Feats on the Fjord* (1841). 'I had nearly fixed on a subject of a totally different kind when Mr. Laing's book on Norway fell in my way, and set my imagination floating on the fjords, and climbing the slopes of the Dovre fjeld. I procured Inglis's travels and everything I could get hold of about the state of Norway while connected with Denmark; and hence arose *Feats on the Fjord*. Two or three years afterwards a note from Mr. Laing to a relative of his in Scotland travelled round to me, in which he inquired whether his relative could tell him, or could learn, when and for how long I had resided in Norway, as he concluded I had, on the evidence of that story. I had the pleasure of transmitting to him the fact that I knew scarcely anything about Norway, and had chosen another scene and subject, when his book caught my fancy and became the originator of my tale' (Harriet Martineau, *Autobiography*, vol. ii, p. 168).

Henry David Inglis (1795-1835) wrote his *Personal Narrative of a Journey through Norway*, etc. (1829), under the pseudonym of 'Derwent Conway,' and from this book Miss Martineau derived her stories about 'Nipen' (?) and 'The Mountain Demon,' as well as the legend about 'The Bishop of Drontheim's Cattle' (see Derwent Conway's book, pp. 221-39).

be directly or distantly related to the slightest neglect of the offices due to this mysterious and powerful being.¹

Unfamiliarity with the country, the manners and ways of its people, are frequently displayed in the novels. Miss Martineau and Miss Ray both seem to have been curiously prejudiced against Galdhøpiggen's claim to rank as the highest mountain in Norway. The former confers the distinction on Sulitjelma, in the neighbourhood of which the scene of her story is laid, while the latter actually tries to reduce the aspect of the mountain by placing a wood close to its snow-decked peak.

The persons who move in the novels generally present a curious gallery of proper names, unfamiliar to Norwegian ears.² Mr. Norris, indeed, suppressing this desire to stamp each individual with a queerly original name, calls his hero by the familiar name of Nils Jensen, but somewhat unfortunately declares that 'there is no Jensen who is a coward,'³ as though one were to say that in England no Jones or Smith could be anything but a hero.

The novelists generally confirm the travellers' accounts of Norwegian hospitality, honesty,⁴ and politeness.⁵ The latter is even extended to small peasant children, who, according to Miss Ray, address each other by full names, and in Mr. Eden's book always talk with perpetual gravity and impressive earnestness: 'Of whom art thou thinking,

¹ Harriet Martineau, *Feats on the Fjord* (1841); Charles Eden, *Twin-brothers of Elfvedale* (1874); Mrs. Gladstone, *Fisherman Niels* (1871).

² Orga, Frolich, Oddo (Christian names in Miss Martineau's book); 'Pastor Froljörn' (Charles Eden, *Twin-brothers of Elfvedale*); 'Güldmar' (surname in Marie Corelli's *Thelma*).

³ W. E. Norris, *Nils Jensen* (in *A Man of His Word* [1885], vol. ii, p. 75).

⁴ Edna Lyall, *A Hardy Norseman* (1899), p. 239; Cath. Ray, *Farm on the Fjord* (1877), p. 72; Agnes Strickland, 'Arthur Ridley' (in *The Rival Crusoes* [1826], pp. 142-3).

⁵ Edna Lyall, *A Hardy Norseman*, p. 380; Edna Lyall, 'A Norwegian Sunday' (1887) in *Temperance Society Jubilee Book*, p. 82.

Eric Svensson, that thou dost not listen to one word I tell thee ? ’

A number of compliments are bestowed on the Norwegian. He is said to be unable to tolerate for a moment any sort of cruelty to animals¹ and to have no higher ambition in life than one day to become a king’s minister²—in short, he is patriotic, noble, and virtuous as heroes in novels ought to be.³ His life is simple, and but for the scoundrels, who are unscrupulously brought to interfere with his peaceful idyll, a very happy one. The fact that he is reported largely to feed on ‘fladbröd,’ ‘a thin, tough substance . . . composed in a large measure of sawdust,’⁴ must not for a moment be taken as throwing the slightest discredit on his pretensions to civilization : it is only meant to heighten the reader’s admiration for his hardiness and noble disregard of material things.

Into the novels are inserted all sorts of thrilling events,

¹ Edna Lyall, *A Hardy Norseman* (1889), p. 149.

² Ibid., p. 9. *A Hardy Norseman* is a pathetic and somewhat monotonous story about three Norwegian orphans of good family making their struggle through life in London. The book was translated into Norwegian and given in *Verden’s Gang*. Edna Lyall (Miss Ada Ellen Bayly) had travelled in Norway in 1886 and again in 1888. With regard to her book, she got the advice of a Norwegian, Provst Kielland (see J. M. Escreet, *Life of Edna Lyall* [1904], p. 84), and thus managed to avoid those errors of which her fellow novelists are frequently guilty. A short sketch, ‘A Norwegian Sunday,’ had appeared in *The Temperance Society Jubilee Book* in 1887.

³ According to Mrs. Gladstone (*Norwegian Stories* : Religious Tract Society, London, 1871) he is also pre-eminently religious. A small boy is taken ill and is ‘ripening for eternity some weeks,’ during which time he is engaged in converting his associates to humility and faith in God. He dies : ‘a gleam of more brilliant sunlight than ever illuminated that arctic world irradiated his face for a brief moment, and then the soul took flight,’ while people who owe their conversion to his example, decide to spread the Gospel in their turn.

⁴ W. E. Norris, *Nils Jensen*, p. 84 (1885).

such as bear-hunting,¹ piracy,² kidnapping³—a somewhat unusual phenomenon in Norway—murderous onslaughts,⁴ and a great variety of suicides.⁵ Now and then there appears an Englishman on the stage, who is always of a noble disposition and generally plays the part of the benefactor,⁶ through whose benevolent interference ultimate happiness is restored to all good characters in the book and a general conversion of all bad people takes place.⁷

There is one trait which nearly all these stories have in common, which, however, is probably to be regarded as the usual characteristic of this special kind of literature rather than as indicating any peculiarity of the Norwegian temperament. The story how two friends—very often brothers—fall in love with the same girl makes up the majority of the plots of these books. Thus Charles Eden⁸ makes two twin-brothers fall in love with the same maid: one sacrifices himself, the other marries her. Catherine Ray likewise makes two brothers love the same girl, till the

¹ C. Ray, *Farm on the Fjord* (1877); C. Eden, *Twin-brothers of Elfvendale* (1874).

² Harriet Martineau, *Feats on the Fjord* (1841).

³ C. Ray, *Farm on the Fjord*.

⁴ Ibid.; Harriet Martineau, *Feats on the Fjord*; Marie Corelli, *Thelma* (1887); C. Eden, *Twin-brothers of Elfvendale*.

⁵ C. Ray, *Farm on the Fjord*; M. Corelli, *Thelma*; W. E. Norris, *Nils Jensen*.

⁶ C. Ray, *Farm on the Fjord*; Oscar—*A Tale of Norway* (1871); C. Eden, *Twin-brothers of Elfvendale*.

⁷ C. Ray, *Farm on the Fjord*.

⁸ C. Eden, *Twin-brothers of Elfvendale* (1874). The twin-brothers, Thorkel and Eric, love the same girl. Eric is the successful one, and Thorkel, driven by jealousy, resolves to see his brother killed. While chasing bears, Thorkel, seeing that Eric has fired his last shot, aims at the beast, but only so as to wound it and make it the more frantic. The bear attacks Eric and almost kills him, but is shot by another of the party (the Englishman). Eric gradually recovers, while Thorkel, struck by his conscience, now devotes himself to nurse his sick brother. When, years later, their boat is upset by a whirlpool, Thorkel takes care that his feebler brother shall be saved. During these efforts he himself perishes in the sea. Eric is saved and marries.

wicked one in the end commits suicide and the girl is happily married to the better one. Mrs. Parr¹ puts two sailors in the same situation, and after the woman's death is generous enough to re-establish the broken friendship by letting the husband and the rejected lover settle down at a lighthouse on the western coast of Norway to spend the rest of their days together in melancholy and sentimental recollections. Mr. W. E. Norris² makes a Norwegian peasant and a Danish painter, whom he has saved from drowning, love the same girl. The peasant, to whom the girl was betrothed, nobly gives her up and goes to perish in the snow, while the woman is married to the painter. Miss Marie Corelli repeats the same story in *Thelma* (1887), but this time about two Englishmen, whose friendship remains unbroken in spite of their affection for the same girl. The gallant martyr suffers nobly in solitude, for which magnanimity he is generously rewarded in the end by being united to the daughter of the heroine, thus, in fact, getting the better part of the bargain.

Thelma: A Norwegian Princess is by far the most remarkable of all novels dealing with life in Norway. The story starts with a chapter in which Sir Philip Bruce-Errington meets a crazy dwarf in a cavern in Altenfjord, in the very north of Norway. The Gothic corridors of this cavern are illuminated by antique Etruscan lamps, and contain among other relics a crucifix of ebony and carved ivory. Sir Philip addresses the dwarf in English and is answered in the same language, but is nevertheless a few minutes later overwhelmed with wonder at the dwarf's ingenuity in discovering his nationality! He next makes the acquaintance of Olaf Gldmar, the father of the heroine. This wonderful person, although but a farmer, living in the very extreme north of Norway, is, like all the rest of his compatriots in this book, thoroughly

¹ Mrs. Parr, 'A Northman's Story,' *Longman's Magazine*, 1883, vol. i, p. 628.

² W. E. Norris, *Nils Jensen* (in *A Man of his Word* [1885], vol. ii).

acquainted with English and even addresses his Norwegian servant-maid in that language.¹ He also possesses a small library—a heterogeneous collection of literature, with regard to which the reader cannot help sharing Sir Philip's profound admiration and respect, for it contains, among other things, works of Shakespeare and Scott, Byron and Keats, Gibbon and Plutarch and—most wonderful of all—an edition of Chapman's translation of Homer! It also turns out that the farmer is an accomplished Latin scholar, who in his conversation displays great fondness for literary topics and even ventures to prove that travels and countries must have been Shakespeare's principal sources of study. No wonder that such a man should complain of the low intellectual standard among his fellow-farmers at Bosekop and have to withdraw himself into lonely and distinguished isolation! But his literary fancies and refined tastes are, after all, only the least striking phases of his personality, for it appears that he is a firm believer in the old religion of Odin and Thor, 'by Valhalla' being his favourite oath. 'Shame must fall on the man who wilfully deserts the faith of his warrior ancestry. Sacred to me for ever be the names of Odin and Thor.' It is consequently only appropriate that such a staunch adherent and supporter of the tradition of the Vikings should die as his forefathers did. Olaf Güldmar, the farmer at Bosekop, when he feels that death is approaching, is carried on board his vessel, and this being set on fire and the sails hoisted, the waves carry him towards the ocean, that he may be given the 'crimson shroud and sea-tomb of his warlike ancestors.' 'He raised his arms as though in ecstasy: "Glory!—joy!—victory!" And, like a noble tree struck down by lightning, he fell—dead!'

Such chaotic nonsense as this, it is only fair to point

¹ '“That is well, Britta,” said Güldmar, speaking in English' (p. 71). Would it not have been more natural if the authoress had made the English party acquainted with Norwegian than to make all the peasants and people at Bosekop converse in fluent English?

out, is exceptional even in the novels with which we are here concerned, and is nowhere to be found except in the work of Miss Marie Corelli. However, it is evidently the kind of stuff which the public appreciates; for *Thelma: A Norwegian Princess* had up to 1916 run through no less than forty-seven editions, with what fatal results as to the readers' impressions and judgement of Norwegian farmers I had better not discuss.

Yet it is difficult to say whether, after all, this fanciful moonshine of Miss Corelli's is not to be preferred to the method of Mr. Vicary, in whose book ¹ no subject is raised without one of the persons improving the opportunity to launch into a lengthy and tedious exposition of all its various details. Thus the reader is alternately entertained by descriptions of sagas and fairy-tales, by commentaries on the myths of the Finns, etc. It must be supposed that only in a very few cases will the curiosity of the reader prove equal to that of the characters in the book, who at times even extend their inquisitiveness to involved etymological questions ²—and probably also there will be found very few people willing to endure such troublesome inclination for arrogant instruction as, according to this book, would appear to be the predominant quality of Norwegian character.

Besides the novels dealing with modern Norway, there are a great number of historic novels and popularized

¹ John Fulford Vicary, *An American in Norway* (London, 1885). Harold Tyssen, an American of Norwegian parentage, is sent to Norway by his father to become acquainted with his native country. He goes to stay with a friend of his father, Amtmand Oscar Nordal, on the west coast of Norway. He falls in love with a younger daughter. Most of his time he spends fishing and shooting with an Englishman, John Stirling. The latter falls in love with another sister. Both are married and go to settle down to a happy life—one couple in England and the other in New York.

² 'I have read that the word "fos" is in Scotland supposed to mean "force"' (p. 44).

'Is the Norse name "rugde" for woodcock, from "ruge," "to hatch"?' (p. 166).

stories from the Sagas. It is to be hoped that the majority of these are not guilty of such blunders as are to be met with in Mr. Edwin Lester Arnold's *Story of Ulla* (1895), which is the supposed autobiography of a Norse Viking, living in the reign of King Halfdan the Black. Although the kingdom of Norway had not as yet come into existence, we learn how King Halfdan acknowledged Ragnhild 'before all Norway as his wife.' Although pen and ink must have been totally unknown in the country, Ulla is able to write his autobiography and further informs us that he has also learned to read. Moreover, he is a Christian and a monk. On the whole he has advanced far beyond his own age, which may also be seen from his allusions to 'merchant Nidaros' and 'the slave-stakes of Trondhjem's market-place,' at a time about one hundred and fifty years before Nidaros was founded and several centuries before it changed its name for that of Trondhjem.

PART II

*ENGLISH ACCOUNTS AND VIEWS OF
NORWEGIAN LITERATURE*

CHAPTER I

A SHORT SKETCH OF ENGLISH INTEREST IN OLD NORSE LITERATURE

CONSIDERING the near relation between the English and the Northern races, it may seem strange to reflect for how long a time Scandinavian literature remained neglected by the English.

As early as 1605 Richard Verstegan,¹ in his *Restitution of Decayed Intelligence in Antiquities concerning the Most Noble and Renowned English Nation*, had, indeed, drawn some attention to Scandinavian mythology and reproached the English nation for its neglect of its true descent.² And other allusions had been scattered through several works of the seventeenth century.³ But, generally speaking, the interest taken in old Scandinavia was as yet a rare one. Thus William Nicholson declared (1680) the stories of the Norwegian kings to be so 'imperfect and incredible that it would but waste paper to give the reader a catalogue

¹ Verstegan (Richard Rowlands), 1565–1620. His book was published at Antwerp 1605, and reprinted in London 1673.

² See Frank Edgar Farley, *Scandinavian Influences in the English Romantic Movement*, pp. 8–9 (vol. ix of *Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*, Boston, 1903).

³ Mr. Farley mentions Sheringham's *De Anglorum Gentis Origine Disceptatio* (1670) and Dr. Hickes's *Linguarum Vett. Septentrionalium Thesaurus* (1703–5). A runic ode, *The Waking of Angantyr*, published in the *Poetic Miscellany*, vol. vi (1716), was taken from Hickes's work (see W. P. Ker, *Warton Lecture* [1910]). For allusions to Northern mythology in English poets (Dryden, Tickell, Pope, Mason, Gray, Collins, etc.), see Farley's book, pp. 24–8.

of them.'¹ More appreciative was Sir William Temple, who in his essay *Of Heroic Virtue* (1692) gave some Latin quotations from Norse poetry and spoke of the 'truly poetical' vein of Egil Skallagrimson.² The authorities from which these authors gathered their knowledge were chiefly the Latin works of Northern scholars and antiquaries such as Ole Worm,³ Bartholinus,⁴ and Torfaeus.⁵ Though in themselves not very important, the English quotations did much to arouse a wider interest in Norse poetry in England. Thus Sir William Temple's essay was the source from which the elder Thomas Warton translated his two stanzas of the Death Song of Ragnar Lodbrog.⁶

It was, however, not till about the middle of the eighteenth century that the English people became aware of the existence of a Scandinavian literature on a larger scale. In 1755 and 1756 Mallet's *Introduction à l'Histoire de Dannemarc* was published at Copenhagen.⁷ It gave an account of the ancient manners and the mythology of the North and included a number of translations from ancient Scandinavian poetry. It was widely read at the time and was the immediate occasion of Bishop Percy's prose translation of *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*, written in 1761,

¹ W. Nicholson, 'An Account of the State of the Kingdoms of . . . Denmark and Norway,' in Moses Pitt's *English Atlas* (1680), vol. i.

² *Of Heroic Virtue*, sect. iv (*Miscell.*, pt. ii, 1692).

³ Ole Worm (1588-1654), *Literatura Runica* (1636). Mr. Farley states that Prof. Kittredge has drawn attention to Pope's use of Wormius as a name for the typical mousing antiquary (*Dunciad*, iii, 188). Sir Adolphus Ward, in his notes to Pope's *Poetical Works* (Globe edition), rejects, however, this interpretation.

⁴ Bartholinus, *De Causis Contemptae a Danis adhuc Gentilibus Mortis* (1689).

⁵ Torfaeus, *Orcades* (1697).

⁶ Published with other poems posthumously, 1784. See W. P. Ker, *Warton Lecture* (1910).

⁷ The second part was reviewed by Goldsmith in the *Monthly Review* for April 1757. See also Gibbon's *Examination of Mallet's Introduction* (1764).

but not published until 1763. This volume contained a preface in which the author apologized for the boldness of his attempt, but defended himself by pointing out the 'amazing fondness for poetry' among the Northern races.

In the same year (1761) Thomas Gray paraphrased two *Odes from the Norse: The Descent of Odin* and *The Fatal Sisters*. The originals Gray found in the works of Bartholinus and Torfaeus,¹ the reading of these works having probably been suggested to him by Mallet's *Introduction* and the *Runic Ode* of Thomas Warton. Gray tells us himself that he was attracted to them by their wild spirit,² and we learn from one of Horace Walpole's letters³ that his intention was to include them in his contemplated *History of English Poetry*. How little known the subject was is well illustrated by the same letter of Walpole: 'Gray has translated,' he writes, 'two noble incantations from the Lord knows who, a Danish Gray, who lived the Lord knows when.' And when the poems were published seven years later, Walpole writes again: 'The subjects . . . are grand and picturesque, . . . but they are not interesting and do not . . . touch any passion. . . . Who can care through what horrors a Runic savage arrived at all the joys and glories they could conceive, the supreme felicity of boozing ale out of a skull of an

¹ Bartholinus, *De Causis Contemptae . . . Mortis* (1689), pp. 617-24, 632-40; Torfaeus, *Orcades* (1697), pp. 36-8. In both these works the Old Norse verses also appeared in *Latin translations*. Prof. Kittredge has proved that Gray knew very little of the old Norse language (see Farley, *Scandinavian Influences in the English Romantic Movement*, pp. 35 ff.). Nevertheless, Mr. Gosse says that Gray translated the poems 'direct from the Icelandic.' 'It may well inspire us with admiration of the poet's intellectual energy to find that he mastered a language which was hardly known at that time by any one in Europe, except a few learned Icelanders, whose native tongue made it easy for them to understand *Norraena*' (E. Gosse, *Gray, English Men of Letters*, pp. 160-1).

² Letter from Gray to Mr. Beattie, December 24, 1767.

³ Letter to George Montague, May 5, 1761.

enemy in Odin's hall?''¹ A still severer criticism is contained in Joseph Ritson's introduction to *Ancient English Romances* (1802), where the author in a note (p. xxvi) regrets that Gray has descended 'to pollute his sublime pindarick on the bards with the Scandic mythology, of which the Britons had not a particle, and, for anything that appears, were totally ignorant.' Others were, however, more enthusiastic about Gray's poems,² and they are now generally regarded as the first indication of the English Romantic movement.

In 1770 Bishop Percy translated anonymously Mallet's book under the title of *Northern Antiquities*, at the same time improving the work by correcting the mistake made by Mallet in confusing Celtic with Gothic. The same year also saw the publication of Michael Bruce's *Poems on Several Occasions*, including two *Danish Odes*, which were apparently modelled upon the *Norse Odes* of Gray.

The near kinship between the English and the Northern races, so long disregarded, was now a matter of common knowledge, and was again and again pointed out :

' Now, borne upon the wings of truth sublime,
Review thy dim original and prime.
This island, spot of unreclaim'd rude earth,
The cradle that receiv'd thee at thy birth,
Was rock'd by many a rough Norwegian blast,
And Danish howlings scar'd thee as they pass'd ;

¹ Walpole, Letter to George Montague, March 12, 1768. In a letter to Mason (May 20, 1776), Walpole speaks, however, of *The Descent of Odin* as the poem 'which I love as much as any of Gray's works.' For the criticism of Gray's poems in contemporary reviews, see Mr. Farley's book, p. 36. A sharp criticism of 'The Fatal Sisters' appeared in the *Dublin University Magazine* for April 1837 (in which is pointed out Gray's blunder in stating the battle to have taken place on Christmas Day, while Torfaeus, his authority, in conformity with the Niala Saga, states it to have taken place on Good Friday).

² For the popularity of Gray's poems from the Norse (reprints, etc.) see Mr. Farley's book, Appendix B (pp. 236-40), and *ibid.*, pp. 37-8.

For thou wast born amid the din of arms,
And suck'd a breast that panted with alarms.' ¹

During all the rest of the century a number of translations and imitations of Norse poetry appeared in England. Among the more prominent of these publications were the *Runic Odes* of Mathias (1781), Richard Polwhele's collection of *Poems chiefly by Gentlemen of Devonshire and Cornwall* (1792), the poems of Anna Seward (1796), Edward Jerningham's *Rise and Progress of Scandinavian Poetry*, a poem in two parts (1784), F. Sayer's *Dramatic Sketches of Northern Mythology* ² (1792), and Matthew Gregory Lewis's poems included in his *Tales of Wonder* (1801). ³

In 1786, in his *Essay on the Origin of Scottish Poetry*, John Pinkerton asserted the indebtedness of Scottish poetry to Scandinavian influences. ⁴ In the following year the author published his dissertation on the *Origin and Progress of the Scythians and the Goths*, ⁵ in which his main object was to prove that the Scythians or the Goths had come to Scandinavia from Persia and that 'the Odin Migration Legend' was entirely false. ⁶ In the following

¹ William Cowper, *Expostulation*, 466-73 (1781).

² One of the pieces, 'The Descent of Frea,' we are told by Mr. Farley, was suggested by a German translation of Ewald's *Balder's Död* (Farley, *Scand. Influences*, p. 120). Ewald's *Death of Balder* was later rendered into English by George Borrow.

³ I give the works from the list put down by Mr. Farley in his exhaustive monograph, to which I am indebted for most of the information contained in this part of the account.

⁴ See S. B. Hustvedt, *Ballad Criticism in Scandinavia and Great Britain in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1916), p. 258.

⁵ Reviewed in the *Critical Review*, September 1787, and in the *Monthly Review*, October 1787.

⁶ See Farley's *Scandinavian Influences*, pp. 196-8. Pinkerton's theory was denounced by others and resulted in a controversy, for particulars of which see Mr. Farley's book, pp. 201-2. Joseph Ritson's *Annals of the Caledonians* (not published until 1828, twenty-five years after the author's death) was one of the many attacks on Pinkerton's dissertation. Pinkerton believed Odin to be merely the name of a deity, and did not, like Gibbon (*Decline and Fall of*

year there appeared reviews of the 'Poetic Edda' in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, the *Critical Review*, and the *Analytical Review*. In 1797 we have the first important translation from the Norse : a metrical translation of Saemund's Edda by A. S. Cottle, which during the next years was followed by essays and articles on Runic Sagas and Scandinavian mythology, written by William Taylor¹ and Dr. Nathan Drake.² In 1804 and 1806 the Hon. William Herbert issued his volumes of *Select Icelandic Poetry*, which were reviewed by Scott in the *Edinburgh Review* for 1806 and alluded to by Lord Byron in his *English Bards and Scottish Reviewers* (1809) in the following lines :

'Herbert shall wield Thor's hammer, and sometimes,
In gratitude, thou'lt praise his rugged rhymes.'

Meanwhile Norse subjects continued to remain a favourite theme with the poets. Blake wrote his ballad *Gwin, King of Norway* (1783) and Peacock his *Fioltar, King of Norway* (1806). Also in the works of poets like Southey³ and Landor⁴ traces of this interest may be found ; while Sir Walter Scott⁵ more than once made the Norsemen the subject of his poetry. In *Marmion* (1808) there is a

the Roman Empire [1776], vol. i, ch. x), distinguish between Odin the God of War and Odin the great legislator of Scandinavia. The theory that the historic Odin was a Gothic chief, who conducted his tribe from the Asiatic Sarmatia into Sweden at the time of Mithridates, was by Gibbon regarded as an agreeable but uncertain hypothesis.

¹ *Monthly Magazine*, December 1798 (Farley).

² *Literary Hours*, 3 vols. (1798-1804).

³ Southey's interest in Norse may be seen from extracts from his correspondence, as given by Mr. Farley in his book, pp. 131-3, notes.

⁴ Mr. Farley mentions that Sir Sidney Colvin in his *Life of Landor* says that Landor's *Gunlaug and Helga* was suggested by William Herbert's *Select Icelandic Poetry* (Farley's book, p. 169).

⁵ For Norse influence on Scott, see Farley's book, pp. 175-6.

picture of Norse and Danish galleys 'plying their oars within the frith of Clyde':

'There floated Haco's banner trim,
Above Norweyan warriors grim,
Savage of heart, and large of limb;
Threatening both continent and isle.'

(Canto III, xx.)

And in one of the poems of *The Pirate* (1821, ch. xv) Sir Walter describes the attacking Norsemen at the time of King Harald Haarfager, their wild spirit, their joy of battle, and their noble disregard of death.

'Headlong forward, foot and horsemen,
Charge and fight, and die like Norsemen!'

Up to this time the pursuit of old Scandinavian studies in England had been mainly confined to poets, historians, and antiquarians. But by the year 1820 a more general knowledge of the subject may be said to be traceable. Thus the books of travels, which began to appear about this time, display a distinct interest in the matter, although the accounts which they give are commonly superficial. Indeed, with the exception of Mr. Laing,¹ the travellers do not appear to have possessed any intimate acquaintance with Norse literature. Dr. Clarke in his travels (1823) informed his readers that poetry had been long cultivated in Norway and was held in esteem among the inhabitants from the earliest periods of their history, that 'the muse had broke the twilight gloom . . . long before they had any literary communications with more civilized nations.'² But of what merits this muse was possessed, not a word was said. And a later writer like Mr. Latham (1840), who possessed more knowledge of the literature, though he undoubtedly affected more than he really had, paid but little attention to the ancient poetry. When he was concerned with the matter, it was chiefly to raise ludicrous

¹ See below, p. 76, note 3.

² Dr. Clarke, *Travels*, sect. ii (1823), pp. 40-1.

and idle questions like this: 'Did Alfred in Guthrum's camp sing in Norse or Saxon?—if he sung in Norse, was he understood?—or did he merely play and not sing at all?'¹ In like manner his appreciation of Norse mythology moved the author to the following reflection: 'We have looked not too long but too exclusively at classical models. Why should there not be the Odin of Thorvaldsen as well as the Jupiter of Phidias?'²—which reflection, though it displays a most creditable recognition of Northern spirit, yet is somewhat lame, the question it asks being overthrown by a certain distinction between the two sculptors rather than by any actual prepossession against the Northern god.

By the middle of the nineteenth century English knowledge of Norse literature had largely increased, and from that time onward the translations from Norse became so numerous that it would be an almost impossible task to give a detailed account of their publications. In 1842 Sir George Dasent translated the prose Edda, and in 1844 Samuel Laing gave his translation of the *Heimskringla*,³ together with an enthusiastic dissertation on the subject, which aroused the interest of Thomas Carlyle and William Morris.⁴ The publications of these writers, as well as

¹ R. G. Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians* (1840), vol. i, p. 257.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 138.

³ Laing claimed but an imperfect acquaintance with Icelandic ('Preface') and his English version of *The Sea-Kings of Norway* was largely indebted to Jacob Aall's Norwegian translation of the *Sagas* (see Laing's 'Preface'), yet he was by no means a careless or unconscientious interpreter. Thus in his *Journal of a Residence in Norway* (1836) he had pointed out several absurdities occurring in Grundtvig's Danish translation of *Snorre* (1822) (*Journal*, pp. 90, 380). That he, in his translation of a part of the *Orkneyinga Saga*, given in his *Journal*, confused two of the main characters of the story (cf. *Dublin University Magazine*, April 1837) must be regarded as a blunder exceptional with this author.

⁴ A few of the more important publications may be added:

1852: An English translation of J. J. A. Worsaae's work *An Account of the Danes and Norwegians in England, Scotland, and Ireland* (Murray, London).

the more recent works of Gudbrand Vigfusson, Eiríkr Magnússon, Professor W. A. Craigie, and Professor W. P. Ker, have been the chief contributions to English knowledge of Northern literature during the later half of the nineteenth century and have secured a permanent place for old Scandinavian literature in England.¹

English and American poets of the second half of the nineteenth century were attracted by Norse literature, and Longfellow included 'The Saga of King Olaf' among his 'Tales of a Wayside Inn':²

And then the blue-eyed Norseman told
A Saga of the days of old.

.
And in each pause the story made
Upon his violin he played,
As an appropriate interlude,

1852: William and Mary Howitt in their work *The Literature and Romance of Northern Europe*.

1858: Dasent's *Oxford Essay on the Norsemen in Iceland*.

1861: Dasent's *Burnt Njal*.

1866: Dasent's *Gisli the Outlaw*.

1866: Sir Edmund Head, *The Saga of Viga Glum*.

1869: *The Saga of Grettir the Strong* (translated by Eiríkr Magnússon and W. Morris).

1870: *The Story of the Volsungs and the Niblungs* (translated by Eiríkr Magnússon and W. Morris).

1875: T. Carlyle, *The Early Kings of Norway*.

1880: F. Metcalfe, *The Englishman and the Scandinavian*.

1883: Vigfusson and Powell's elaborate work *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*.

For further interest taken in the subject, see Appendix C (a list of articles which appeared in English periodicals between 1820 and 1900).

¹ Important in this connection are the publications of the 'Viking Club' (later the 'Viking Society'), and the works issued in Nutt's Northern Library.

² 'Zu grunde gelegt hat Longfellow nicht den Isländischen Grundtext, sondern die Englische Uebersetzung desselben von Samuel Laing' (Herman Varnhagen, *Longfellow's Tales of a Wayside Inn und Ihre Quellen* [Berlin, 1884], p. 62).

Fragments of old Norwegian tunes
 That bound in one the separate runes,
 And held the mind in perfect mood,
 Entwining and encircling all
 The strange and antiquated rhymes
 With melodies of olden times.'

This interest in Norse literature was also extended to Scandinavian ballad-poetry.¹

Translations of Danish ballads had appeared in Matthew Gregory Lewis's *Tales of Wonder* (1801)² and in Robert Jamieson's *Popular Ballads and Songs* (1806), while a great number was later given by George Borrow in his *Romantic Ballads* (1826).³

In the eighteenth century Pinkerton had assigned all the supernatural machinery of romance to a northern source; and about the middle of the nineteenth century we find Charles Kingsley pointing out the indebtedness of English and Scottish ballads to Scandinavian influences. In a letter 'to the Rev. Alfred Strettel, who was about to give some lectures at Queen's College, Kingsley wrote :

'Give them a lecture on the rise of our Norse forefathers—give them something from the Voluspa and Edda. Show them the peculiar wild, mournful, gigantic, objective imagination of the men, and its marriage with the Saxon subjectivity (as I fancy) to produce a ballad school. Remember two things: the Norse are the great *creators*, all through, and all the ballads came from the North of England and Lowlands of Scotland, i.e. from half Norse blood.'

¹ See S. B. Hustvedt, *Ballad Criticism in Scandinavia and Great Britain in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1916, American-Scandinavian Foundation).

² The *Monthly Magazine* for January 1800 gave a prose version of 'A Norwegian Ballad,' translated from *Le Nord littéraire* by A. S. Cottle.

³ Borrow's Danish ballads were imitated from A. S. Vedel's collection of Danish ballads, which had first appeared at Copenhagen in 1591.

April 17, 1849.

Naturally the travellers were largely attracted by the ballads, which often formed a favourite topic of their accounts. Thus Bishop Heber remarked in a letter¹ that the Norwegian songs of which he had contrived to collect a few were in the same measure and frequently almost in the same language as the Old English. The poetry to which the Norwegian mountain airs were sung was said to be of 'a melancholy cast, chiefly legendary, and often verging upon the terrific.'² Derwent Conway and Mr. Latham in their books gave a great number of translations.³ 'I have no doubt,' Derwent Conway 'wrote, 'that a volume of very charming selections of Scandinavian poetry might be obtained by one who would bestow sufficient attention upon the subject'—thus anticipating M. B. Landstad's collection of 1853.

In 1867 Robert Buchanan, in the preface to his *Ballad Stories of the Affections from the Scandinavian*,⁵ drew further attention to northern legends: 'there were heroes and giants breasting the Dovre Fjord (!) as well as striding over the Adriatic.' These ballads, he says, are never so refinedly tender as the best Scottish pieces, 'but they

¹ *Life of Reginald Heber* (1830), p. 83.

² Derwent Conway, *A Personal Narrative*, etc. (1829), p. 64.

³ *Ibid.* :

p. 243 : trans. of High Norse love-song ('Meet me, maid, by the pine-fringed lake').

p. 244 : trans. of High Norse drinking-song ('To the brim, young man, fill it up, fill again, Drain, drain, young man, 'tis to Norway you drain.').

p. 245 : trans. of Norwegian war-song ('Sons of the mountains, sons of the lake, Sons of the forest, Old Norway, awake').

p. 247 : trans. of a 'Forest legend.'

R. G. Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians* (1840) :

vol. i, p. 276 : trans. of 'For Norges kjaempers födeland.'

p. 278 : trans. of 'Aa kjöre Vatn, aa kjöre ved.'

p. 280 : others mentioned.

⁴ Derwent Conway, *A Personal Narrative*, etc. (1829), p. 64.

⁵ Reviewed by W. B. in *St. James's Magazine*, 1867, vol. i, p. 285. In the *People's Journal* for 1851 (pp. 123, 186, 260) there had appeared articles on 'Norwegian Loves and Legends.'

have a truth and a force of their own, which stamp them as genuine poetry. . . . They give one an impression of intense earnestness, of a habit of mind at once reticent and shadowed with the strangest mysteries.'

However, Buchanan, like his predecessors Jamieson and Borrow, took his selection almost entirely from Danish ballads, and the same was also the case with the ballads which had been translated by William and Mary Howitt in their *Literature and Romance of Northern Europe* (1852). In this latter work the many points of resemblances between Old English and Scandinavian ballads were pointed out, especially the use of the refrain¹: 'So completely are the Scandinavian and the British ballads of one school, that they are often identical in name.'²

The interest taken in England in Norse subjects was, as we have seen, intimately connected with the Romantic movement, and though it was an outcome and not the origin of that movement, it had a considerable power in inspiring and accelerating its development. Though originally nourished by mere curiosity, it gradually grew into a powerful knowledge of the history and ancient literature of the northern countries. It brought about a closer intellectual contact between England and Scandinavia, and in doing so, helped to give rise in England to the first stray inklings of the existence of a modern literature of the North.

¹ *Literature and Romance of Northern Europe* (1852), vol. i, pp. 245-7.

² *Ibid.*, p. 250.

CHAPTER II

OUTLINES OF NORWEGIAN LITERATURE FROM THE DEATH OF HOLBERG TO THE APPEARANCE OF IBSEN AND BJÖRNSON

THE small consideration which English writers have paid to modern Norwegian literature before Ibsen and Björnson would justify any reader, not previously acquainted with the subject, in believing no distinguished man of letters to have appeared in Norway before the middle of the nineteenth century. Partly to correct this false impression and partly to serve as a background against which such accounts and allusions as have occurred with reference to the period in question might be suitably viewed, a short sketch of the outlines of Norwegian literature before Ibsen and Björnson will here be given by way of introduction.

Up to 1814 Norwegian and Danish literature formed a unity. Norwegian poets, who like Peter Dass ¹ (1647–1708) remained and worked in their own country, were exceptions. The great majority of writers spent their lives in Copenhagen, and, generally speaking, displayed few national peculiarities which distinguished them from their Danish colleagues. Holberg ² also has his place

¹ 'Nordlands Trompet' (i.e. 'The Trumpet of Nordland') (1739). The poet's father, Peter Dundas, was a Scotchman of Dundee, who came over to Norway in 1635.

² As I believe Holberg's name at the present day to be known to most Englishmen who take any interest in the literature of foreign countries, I have not thought it necessary to give an account of his literary career in this chapter. Such an account has been given by Mr. Gosse in his article on Holberg contributed to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

in the common literature of the two countries, though the Norwegians are fond of thinking that in sympathies and feelings he is typically Norwegian.¹ His authorship, which, apart from its literary eminence, was remarkable for its efforts to introduce the culture of Western Europe and make this the predominant element of the intellectual life of the North,² ceased, with few exceptions, to exercise an immediate influence at the time of the author's death, and was for the next generation largely overshadowed by powerful German influences. The Norwegian authors

¹ It would seem that Holberg also considered himself so, from the fact that he entered his name in the Bodleian visitors' book (April 18, 1706) as 'Ludovicus Holbergius Norvegus,' and not like another Norwegian as 'Norvego-Danus.'

² For English influences on Danish-Norwegian literature in the age of Holberg, see J. Paludan, *Fransk-Engelsk indflydelse paa Danmarks litteratur i Holbergs tidsalder* (1913). For Holberg's indebtedness to English literature see V. Olsvig, *Det store Vendepunkt i Holbergs liv* (1895), and a later work by the same author, *Holberg og England* (1913)—an exhaustive but chaotic exposition, in which the points of the earlier book are taken up for further examination. A few of these points may here be added:

Mr. Olsvig thinks 'Erasmus Montanus' to be derived from the 108th number of the *Tatler* (Addison), while he finds the origin of the 'Political Tinker' in one of the numbers of the *Spectator*. He also traces points of resemblance between the *Tatler*, No. 81 (Addison) and Holberg's Epistle No. 512 (in which H. relates having dreamed how in the dwellings of the dead he met with the English 'Spectator,' 'whom I had seen in my youth in London and whom I distinctly recognized'). Mr. Olsvig also draws attention to the fact that H. borrowed almost all the names of the male characters of his comedy *Don Ranudo* from Dryden's and Davenant's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Likewise he finds resemblance between H.'s comedy *Abra Cadabra* and Addison's *Drummer*; while H.'s views on women are consistent with those expressed by Richard Steele in the *Tatler*. Olsvig also refers to numerous accounts and allusions to contemporary English literature scattered throughout H.'s works (a reference to Farquhar's *Recruiting Officer* in *Peder Paars*, allusions to Milton, Locke, Mandeville, Butler, Dryden, Swift, Pope, etc., in *Moral Thoughts* and in *The Epistles*).

A recent work on Holberg is O. J. Campbell, Junr., *The Comedies of Holberg* (Harvard Studies in Compar. Lit., vol. iii), Cambridge, Mass., 1914.

continued their contributions to the common literature, but though some of them succeeded in attaining a name of contemporary esteem, they were not as yet remarkable for any character of their own. An exception was C. B. Tullin, who, in contrast to the majority of Norwegian writers, spent most of his time in Norway. This author, who wrote descriptive poetry much in the same style as James Thomson¹ and in his works also displayed a great admiration for Young, the author of the *Night Thoughts*, enjoyed during his life something more than a local reputation, his best poem, 'Mai-dagen,' being translated both into French and German.

By the year 1772 a change in the intellectual life of Denmark-Norway took place, the effects of which may be traced throughout the rest of the century. In that year '*Det norske Selskap*' ('The Norwegian Society') was founded in Copenhagen. Originally it was designed as a social club, but gradually it grew into opposition to the Danish Society of Literature. This society, the central figure of which was the greatest Danish poet of the day, J. Ewald, was entirely dominated by German views and German influences.

In 1750, four years before Holberg's death, the German poet Klopstock had come to Copenhagen as a pensioner of the Court. He remained in the country for nine years, during the whole of which period he laboured deliberately and energetically to bring about a complete Germanizing of the intellectual life in Denmark. He was singularly successful, and his influence on Danish literature is perhaps the most remarkable instance of a poet's literary tyranny over the intellectual life of a foreign country ever known to literary history. In a few years Denmark was singing his praises: a critic hailed him as 'the greatest poet of the day and perhaps of all ages'; while the poets themselves (Ewald and his school) made his odes the models

¹ Tullin's indebtedness to Thomson was asserted by Henrik Jaeger (*Litteraturhistoriske Pennetegninger*), but has lately been reduced by Francis Bufl in his work *Fra Holberg til Nordahl Brun* (1916), p. 113.

of innumerable imitations. Like Klopstock they maintained that ethical profit is the true aim of literature, and like him they regarded pompous metre and high-pitched language as the greatest beauties to which poetry can attain.

This Germanizing of Danish culture was carried still further: a German, Johan Elias Schlegel, was appointed to an office in Denmark, where he conducted a weekly paper, *Der Fremde*, and wrote plays which he called 'Beyträge zum Dänischen Theater'; while another German, Basedow, was appointed Professor of the Fine Sciences at the Academy of Sorö.¹

The Danish school, which with Ewald shared the admiration and predilection for Klopstock and his poetry, was chiefly represented by the Danish Literary Society, and between this and 'the Norwegian Society' there sprang up a controversy which lasted almost up to 1793, when 'the Norwegian Society' ceased to be a literary club. 'The Norwegian Society,' in its earlier years, bore much resemblance to the company that met at Will's and Button's coffee-houses. Its often somewhat narrow-minded criticism of Ewald and his school took the form of witty epigrams made at the meetings and from there carried about the town, while N. Treschow wrote parodies on the Klopstockian odes and condemned their style and rhymeless verses. One may get an impression of the social atmosphere of the 'Society' from Johan Wibe's festival song:

' Here canst thou find thee friends most true
If friendship be the aim in view,
If common honour be thy goal;
Fill up thy glass with generous wine,
High 'gainst thy neighbour's glass ring thine,
To Norway's brotherhood drink the skole ! ' ²

¹ 'In the library of Copenhagen there is a collection of German church hymns, consisting of 33,712 numbers alphabetically arranged in 500-600 volumes, which Princess Charlotte Amelia, Christian VI's sister, presented to the institution' (*Spectator*, February 6, 1886).

² Translated in W. and M. Howitt's *Literature and Romance of Northern Europe* (1852).

For their subjects the Norwegians, in contrast to the Danes, went back to the ancient times or wrote of the scenery and peasantry of their country. In this line the poems of J. Nordahl Brun and C. Frimann have the merit of an independent national character. J. N. Brun was a writer of a number of songs, some of which have come down to the present day ('Bor jeg paa det Høie fjeld,' 'For Norges kjaempers födeland'). But in his time he was most admired as a dramatist. One of his tragedies, *Zarine* (1772), an imitation of Voltaire's tragedy *Zaïre*, is now only remembered in connection with Wessel's '*Kjærlighed uden strømper*' ('Love without stockings') (1772). This play was a parody of the French classical tragedies, and contained some special allusions to Brun's *Zarine* in much the same way as Buckingham's *Rehearsal* had a direct reference to the heroic dramas of Davenant and Dryden.¹ While the kind of tragedies which gave occasion to Wessel's play has been forgotten long ago, the parody itself still keeps its place on the stages of both countries and forms a most amusing piece of reading. The graceful humour and the simplicity of expression made Wessel stand out as by far the most brilliant writer of the circle. Of other writers must be mentioned Edvard Storm² (the author of a popular ballad 'Sinclair visen,' and of several songs written in the dialect of his native parish), Jonas Rein ('the poet of sorrow,' an appreciated elegist of his time), Jens Zetlitz, P. H. Frimann, Claus Fasting, Edvard Colbjørnsen, and Christen Pram.

In contrast to the Danish admiration for German poetry, the Norwegians looked to France for literary contact. In considering this we become aware of the important fact that the two advances towards Western civilization in

¹ Mr. Gosse remarks: 'Perhaps the closest English analogue is Henry Carey's *Dragon of Wantley*, the fun of which was so potent against the Italian opera in 1738' (Gosse, *The Danish National Theatre*).

² Though a Norwegian, Storm did not belong to 'the Norwegian Society.'

the common literature of Denmark and Norway during the eighteenth century were *both initiated by Norwegians*, i.e. by Holberg and the Norwegian Society.

Thus Fasting declared the English poetry 'of all models' to be 'the greatest next to those of Rome and Athens.' In this connexion, Welhaven remarks :

'But as it is well known that the Norwegian authors, on the whole much more than the Danish ones, tried to form themselves after English models, thus it was also several of those sides of the English poetical literature in which the national spirit principally appears which mostly imprinted themselves in the poetry of the Norwegians. *But this English influence cannot be called accidental; it is only an indication of a fact, which at various times and in various bearings has occurred in the cultural history of the Norwegian people.*'¹

Thus the Norwegian share in the common literature of the two countries during the last fifty years of the union has a double merit: it gave rise to the development of a national poetry in *Norway*, and it acted as a safeguard against the imminent danger which, in the shape of German influences, threatened to destroy the natural process of development of the *Danish* literature.

The patriotic poetry which had been written by the Norwegians before 1814 naturally got wind into its sails from the new-born independence, and for some time it dominated all branches of literature. As there just then was no prominent man to take the lead, the poets went on indulging in the coarsest forms of chauvinistic language, displaying a self-idolatry and a self-sufficiency which, though it had little to do with poetry, proved that the ages of dependency had not succeeded in quelling the national spirit. This period has been called 'Kraftpatriotismen' ('The Age of Archpatriotism'), and its poetry consisted of hymns and odes written to glorify 'Old Norway.' Its absurdities are well illustrated by the notorious

¹ Welhaven, *Samlede Verker* (udgave 1867-8), vol. viii, pp. 114-15.

lines in S. O. Wolff's 'Til mit Födeland' ('To my Native Country'), where the poet, speaking of the Norwegian mountains, says :

'Om Kloden rokkes end, dets fjelde
Skal stormen dog ei kunde fælde.'

('Though shaken be the globe, its mountains
The storm unable is to crush.' ¹)

A firmer basis for the future Norwegian literature was laid by three poets, whose names are always mentioned together and usually referred to as the 'Trefoil.' They were C. N. Schwach, H. A. Bjerregaard, and M. C. Hansen. All of them wrote poetry, though Bjerregaard is best remembered as the author of a play, *Fjeldeventyret* (1828) ('An Adventure in the Mountains'), and Hansen for his novels, in which he took up the life of the peasants for literary treatment.

It is not, however, till after 1830 that Norwegian literature reaches a standard of any greater importance. That year was the year of Wergeland's *Skabelsen, Mennesket, og Messias* ('Creation, Man, and Messiah'). This gigantic poem (it contained originally 720 pages of iambic verse) was the work of a youth of twenty-two and was described by Wergeland himself as 'the epic of mankind and the Bible of the republicans.' Its subject, 'so colossal that even that of Milton seems small compared to it,' was chosen to represent the central ideas of Wergeland's philosophy of life. It is an evidence of his strong belief in the possibilities of human perfection. To be perfect is the aim on which the yearning of man is concentrated—the goal towards which he is striving—nature itself being one long development towards final perfection. It is only natural that, to represent ideas like these, the poet should betake himself to a somewhat aerial language, which makes it no small effort to get through the work from beginning to

¹ Conscious of some exaggeration in the expression, the poet later changed it for: 'Om kloden rokkes *lidi*, dets fjelde,' etc. ('Though the globe be shaken a *little*, its mountains,' etc.).

end. Besides, the verses—apart from many exquisite passages of poetic grandeur and beauty—suffer from a painful lack of harmonious effect. The passages are long, the sentences interwoven, the meaning often obscure. But all these objections being granted, the poem remains one of the most remarkable works of genius which Norwegian literature has ever produced.

Before the publication of *Skabelsen, Mennesket, og Messias*, Wergeland had already made himself known as the author of a series of farces (written under the pseudonym of 'Siful Sifadda'), a tragedy (1828), and a volume of lyrical poems (1829). He had become the central figure of a group of young men who made it their platform to resist all Danish influences and to work for an independent national literature. In this connexion he was hailed as the advocate of liberty, and to such an extent that he actually became identified with the celebrations of May 17, the day on which the new constitution had been sanctioned by the delegates at Eidsvold.

The patriotic party which gathered round Wergeland was soon opposed by another group of young men, less numerous and more conservative, which counted among its members several names afterwards to be among the most distinguished in the country (P. A. Munch, Fr. Stang, and A. M. Schweigaard). The leader of this group was J. S. Welhaven, whose critical spirit, combined with a fastidious and highly developed taste, made him well qualified for the struggle which was soon to break loose and was destined to divide the literary world of the country into two irreconcilable camps. Determined not to break with tradition, Welhaven detested, as utterly harsh and unaesthetic, the verbosity and angularity of Wergeland's poetry, with its multiplicity of images. The controversy was started by Welhaven with the anonymous publication of a poem 'To Henrik Wergeland' (1830), the opening line of which asked: 'How long 'gainst reason will you rave?' and ended with the assurance that Wergeland had secured for himself 'the rank among the Bedlamites of Parnassus.'

The poem was replied to by Wergeland's friends and followed by new arrows from Welhaven. 'Wergeland's poetical vocation,' the latter wrote (1830), 'seems to be a desperate fight against all rules of beauty and sound thought.'¹ Two years later Welhaven published a brochure: *Wergeland's Poetry and Polemic illustrated by Documents*, in which he endeavoured to prove that Wergeland 'had deprived himself of the name of a poet.' Among the replies which were called forth by this brochure was a well-written plea for Wergeland by his father (1833).

The struggle assumed still greater dimensions when Welhaven in 1834 published a book of sonnets: *Norges Dämring* ('The Twilight of Norway').² This time the attack was no longer directed against a single man, but against the whole people whose indolence and swagger, according to the poet's view, were threatening to deprave the nation. Yet he thought there might still be hope, the poem ending with the following lines:

' Thy dwelling, peasant, is on holy ground.
What Norway was, that she again may be
By land, by sea, and in the world of men.'

Meanwhile Wergeland's courage was not crushed. He was determined to conquer by singing ('vincere canendo'), and during the next ten years, that is up to the day of his death (1845), he continued to pour forth a number of amazing works. Apart from his poetical writings, he also for a time conducted a radical newspaper, and issued pamphlets and periodicals for the education of the working classes, and established libraries for the poor. Through all his work during this period one may trace his sympathy for the oppressed creatures of society, which towards the end found its strongest expression in his plea for the Jews, who at that time were forbidden by law to settle

¹ 'Til en modstander i Morgenbladet' ('To an antagonist in the Morgenblad').

² The book had on its title-page the following lines by Byron:
'Night wanes. The vapours round the mountains curl'd
Melt into morn, and Light awakes the world.'

in the country (*The Jew, The Jewess*). This sympathy was also extended to the inanimate life of nature, to flowers, of which he was a passionate lover (*Jan van Huysum's Flowerpiece*). But above all it comes out whenever he addresses the animals.

‘And methought with high sensation
I embraced the whole creation.’

(‘To My Rabbit.’)

When on his deathbed he asked the bishop who called on him whether he thought he would meet his favourite horse in heaven. The bishop, puzzled by the question, asked why he wanted to know. ‘Because,’ Wergeland replied, ‘if not, it does not matter to me either.’

During his whole life he was filled with joy and love of nature: ‘When a bird flies above my head, my hate at once is a thousand yards away.’

Thus also his poetry forms one long apotheosis to greatness and beauty:

‘Nor is the Hellespont with Hero’s blaze alight
Deep as the bosom of the Stagirite.
How can the sweet Aegean Seas
Be like the soul of Socrates?
Or how Scamandros’ wind
Have curves of beauty as its poet’s mind?’

Occasionally only, a note of bitterness is heard:

‘Golden eagle, laid in chains,
Doomed to limp with broken wing,
That for more than twenty years
Since it felt the arrow’s sting,
Subject to a watchdog’s pains
In a lonely farm appears,—
Suffers not
All a poet’s pain exceeding
Who ’midst petty nation’s dust
Is in World’s dark corner thrust,
With a tongue
Bearing all his pretty song
But to where its lips are breathing,’

(‘The Jewess.’)

On his deathbed he continued his writings, and to these last belongs 'The English Pilot,' probably the warmest homage ever paid by any poet to a foreign country.

Wergeland's admiration for England had always been a great one. From the reading of his works one may gather an impression of his interest in English literature, be it Shakespeare,¹ Milton, Gray,² or Byron.

In 'The English Pilot' the poet worked all his impressions of Britain and the British into one beautiful epic, the opening song of which already strikes tones of deepest admiration.

'That which glitters yonder west
'Twixt the sea and skics above her,
That is England sun-caressed,
Lo, the cliffs of Dover !

'Feel the life breath fresh and strong
From old England's oakwoods blowing,
Fluttering, gay, the pennon's tongue
In the breeze is flowing.

'Kent's bright flow'ry field and lea
Have sweet scents with it united,
Sailors' hearts like pennons free
Greet the land delighted.

'See how strong from deepest ground
England's pearly-white foundation !
Freedom her Defence has found
With the island nation.

'God has built around her home
Bulwarks strong from base to towers,
Just where she does forward loom
'Gainst all Europe's powers.

¹ In 'Serenade af Venetianerne' there are lines directly taken from the moonlight serenade between Jessica and Lorenzo in *The Merchant of Venice*.

² In the poem 'Til en gran' there is a stanza which appears to have been directly suggested by one of the verses of Gray's 'Elegy' ('Some village Hampden,' etc.).

‘ Shakespeare’s cliff in Western sea
 Is the throne mid billows’ motion,
 Whence the queen of victory
 Rules o’er land and ocean.’¹

And he winds up this introductory song by the following lines :

‘ O, how grand to live and die
 In that land of woods and flowers
 Sweet, in peaceful rest to lie
 In those oak tree bowers.’²

Already at the first sight of England this instinctive feeling of affection takes possession of the poet’s mind ; it makes him understand how his Viking-ancestors could ‘ fall mortally in love ’ with the country, so that they forgot their own home and left it for ever to infuse their blood into new surroundings. He catches the first dim view of the cliff, where once stood King Lear, and his imagination carries him back to the awful scene of Shakespeare’s tragedy :

‘ Yonder to the left it stood,
 Oh so high and grand and mighty
 With the light and bluish mist
 Of the evening circling round it.
 On its summit
 Lighted by the evening sunset
 Burnt a single crest with purple
 Oh, so red as though old Lear stood
 In the wind on yonder top,
 Not in tattered rags enveloped,
 But arrayed in royal garments
 In his mantle’s purple blood.’

Others of the most famous of Wergeland’s shorter poems were also written on his deathbed, among them the beautiful sailor-song ‘ Last Voyage ’ :

¹ Translated by Mrs. Christine Morison.

² Translated by J. A. Dahl (*Norwegian and Swedish Poems*, Bergen, 1872).

' Last Voyage now is near at hand,
Sing, Sailor, oh !
At Heaven's port I soon shall land,
Sing, Sailor, oh !'

' With shores of diamond and of gold
The Isles of Heav'n I'll soon behold.

' They are the starry lustre bright
You on the night-watch had in sight.

' Go on and take the chance of it:
Through clouds into the Blue you flit.

' You'll meet your wife, you'll meet your friend,
Your time with your dead children spend.

' Then will break loose a greater glee,
Sing, Sailor, oh !
Than when you here came home from sea,
Sing, Sailor, oh !'

In the summer of 1845 Wergeland died, only thirty-seven years old. Not only had he lived up to his standard 'vincere canendo,' but even in death poetry did not forsake him. 'Moriebatur canendo' might have been his epitaph.

Meanwhile Welhaven, besides his critical work, continued to write poetry. As a poet his great merits are the elegance and polish of expression, a smooth language assisted by an invariably perfect metre. One may get an impression of the kind of poetry by glancing over the headings of the verses. Inscriptions like the following: 'Aasgaardsreien' (built upon a myth from Norse mythology), 'Dyre Vaa,' 'Koll with the Axe,' 'The Round Table and the Stone,' 'The Nixie,' 'The Miller-boy,' 'At the Summer Cheese-farm,' 'The Preserved Tree,' are all unmistakable indications of the two great symptoms of the Romantic movement. When a poem opens in this way:

' A hall with mossy wallings
Stands high on Gyrrisvold,
And in its room is sitting
The aged giant Koll,'

everybody will at once recognize the Romantic writer's predilection for legends and tales of ancient ages. On the other side 'the Return to Nature' distinctly appears, as for instance in the poem 'Decoying Tunes,' the first stanza of which I have tried to translate as follows—though unable even proximately to render its beauties :

'There flew a bird across Pinery ridge
Which sings to you songs forgotten,
It lured me away from the open road
And into places umbrageous.

'I came to hidden fountains and tarns
Where elks their thirst are quenching,
But still the distant tunes were heard
Like hum 'twixt the windy sighing :
Tiri—lil—tiri—lil—tove,
Far away in some woody cove.'

It is, however, Welhaven's romances and ballads which have secured for him his fame with posterity. One poem, 'The Republicans,' deals with the Polish refugees in Paris. The last lines of this poem :

'They looked at each other. He walked from the spot.
Champagne they had still, but they tasted it not,'

have got a special interest, Ibsen afterwards having applied them in one of his later dramas (*Little Eyolf*).

Having bestowed so much space on Wergeland and Welhaven, I shall have to pass quickly over the other authors whose works belong to the first half of the nineteenth century. Andreas Munch¹ wrote plays and poetry, not essentially different from those of Welhaven. Jörgen Moe was a writer of pretty songs, whose main services to literature, however, are to be found in his collaboration with P. C. Asbjørnsen. In 1842-3 they published *Norske Folke-eventyr*² ('Norwegian Popular Tales'), which

¹ Munch later translated Tennyson's 'Enoch Arden' into Norwegian.

² In 1844 a second volume appeared and a new collection in 1871. Many of the tales were translated into English in 1859 by Sir George Dasent.

Grimm could not praise highly enough. Their work, an invaluable contribution to Scandinavian folklore and of immense national importance, was in 1853 supplemented by M. B. Landstad's collection of Norwegian popular songs, and a little later by Sophus Bugge's admirable little collection (1858).

The year 1850 marks the initiation of a new era in Norwegian literature. In that year Ibsen's first play, *Catilina*, was published under the pseudonym of Brynjolf Bjarme. In 1855 Camilla Collet, the sister of Wergerland, issued *Amtmandens Døtre* ('The County-Sheriff's Daughters'), which may be regarded as the first Norwegian realistic novel. In 1852 Nicolai Östgaard's *En Fjeldbygd* ('A Mountain District') anticipated the peasant-stories of Björnson, the first of which appeared in 1857 ('Synnöve Solbakken'). To this period also belong the writings of A. O. Vinje, the first prominent poet to write in the language constructed by the peasant philologist, Ivar Aasen (1813-95). In 1863 Vinje published in English *A Norseman's View of Britain and the British*, the value of which book, in spite of many unquestionable merits,¹ was considerably reduced by frequent errors and mistakes as well as by an essential deficiency in observation. Vinje had not the opportunity to come into close contact with English society, which he judged from an outsider's point of view. He was himself of a decidedly controversial temperament, as a writer invariably at his greatest ease when attacking and criticizing with a scourge of merciless wit. With respect to his book on England, there can be little doubt that his vigorous criticism and virulent attacks sprang from an inborn envy of people by birth or gifts his superiors or of things placed out of his reach. He was never quite able to free himself from the stamp of the cottar's son. However, when writing in the rural language, his talents developed on the lines of their natural bent, and some of

¹ Vinje was a great reader of English literature. He and P. C. Asbjørnsen were among the first Norwegians to give an account of Darwin's doctrine of evolution.

his lyrics may well be reckoned among the finest specimens of poetry which Norwegian literature produced in the nineteenth century.

With the name of Vinje this short account of Norwegian authors must be brought to a close. It has been the purpose of the preceding pages to draw the outlines of Norwegian literature during the hundred years that followed after Holberg's death. From the close of that period, during the whole rest of the century, Norwegian literature means first and foremost the works of Ibsen, Björnson, Lie, and Kielland.

CHAPTER III

ENGLISH WRITERS ON NORWEGIAN LITERATURE BEFORE IBSEN AND BJÖRNSON

IF England had been slow to recognize the merits of Old Norse literature, it took her a still longer time to realize the existence of a modern literature among the Northern nations.

Only one name appeared from time to time : the name of Ludvig Holberg.

In the eighteenth century Goldsmith had bestowed a page on him in his *Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe* (1759, ch. vi) and expressed a deep admiration for his 'ingenious productions.' 'He was,' Goldsmith wrote, 'perhaps one of the most extraordinary personages that has done honour to the present century.' But Goldsmith's account must soon have been forgotten. For in an article in the *Edinburgh Review* for July 1803¹ Sydney Smith stated his doubts whether there were twenty persons in Great Britain who had ever heard the name of any Danish author. He gave a rather long list of names, including that of Holberg, regretting the low state of merit to which 'Danish' literature had attained : 'they are certainly not names on which the learned fame of any country can be built very high. . . . It would be loss of time to speak of the fine arts of Denmark : they hardly exist.' In one thing Sydney Smith was right : it is always loss of time to speak of a subject one knows nothing about. And, no doubt, he had good reasons for not going more deeply into the matter. Not only

¹ Art. *Tableau des états danois*, par Jean Pierre Catteau (à Paris, 1802).

must he have been ignorant of Goldsmith's account, but he was evidently unaware of the fact that Holberg's *Niels Klim* had been translated into English as early as 1742, a work which Samuel Laing in 1836 stated to have long been a favourite book with English schoolboys.¹ One may well be allowed to presume that it was not till after the perusal of the book before him that the reviewer became aware of Holberg's existence and could be reckoned among the twenty whom he was pleased to think acquainted with Holberg's name. From the whole article it is only too evident that the reviewer merely adopted the view of the author, which is also obvious from the following remark, so singular on the part of a critic: 'We are convinced that everything he [the author] says, is true.'²

The next allusion to Holberg³ is contained in the *Foreign Review* for 1828: 'What reader of his works does not admire his gaiety, his inexhaustible humour, his shrewd satire?' '—and later in the same volume, in an article on the works of Oehlenschläger, he is spoken of as the man who combated the prevailing pedantry and bad taste with satire and ridicule.

'Shakespeare [?] and Molière were the great models on which this author formed his works, which though they cannot at the present day be regarded as samples of refined writing, yet . . . entitle their author to the praise of having formed the national taste and reduced his language to that state of simplicity and purity, by which it now occupies a considerable place amongst the living tongues of Europe.'⁴

¹ Laing's *Journal of a Residence* (1836), p. 382.

² This seems to illustrate the superficiality of the early *Edinburgh Reviews*, and to justify Sir Leslie Stephen's characterization of the majority of articles as 'what is now called "padding"—mere perfunctory bits of work, obviously manufactured by the critic out of the book before him' (Sir Leslie Stephen, 'The First Edinburgh Reviewers'—*Hours in a Library*, vol. ii).

³ An English translation of Holberg's autobiography appeared in 1827.

⁴ *Foreign Review*, 1828 (vol. ii), p. 267.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

A full analysis of *Peder Paars* appeared in the *Dublin University Magazine* for August 1836, where Holberg again was spoken of with great admiration. From its extent, object, and execution, *Peder Paars* was said to be entitled to 'a high rank among those of its class,' and 'as in the case of Butler's *Hudibras*, it is in the dialogues the author displays the most learning, wit, and vigour.'

Also the travellers frequently mentioned Holberg's name, although only a few of them had any intimate acquaintance with his writings. Laing found his comedies 'full of life and bustle,' which, after all, is but a moderate recommendation. He also rejected the comparison of Holberg with Voltaire: 'there is something more required than quantity, variety, and influence in the literature of Denmark to make a Voltaire.'¹

If it were true that Holberg's merits were limited to the three qualities which the English author attributed to him, he would scarcely have been entitled to a literary name outside Denmark and would probably at the present day only be remembered as a respectable name in the history of literature, as a writer whose vitality faded away with his own life. However, it is hardly fair to deal with the travellers' critical remarks as though they were part of an intended literary criticism, more particularly as they themselves make no pretensions whatever in this respect. They are only interesting so far as they throw a light on the increasing interest of the English in Norwegian culture and civilization. 'I am going through a course of Holberg,' Mr. Latham wrote (1840), 'the Molière of the North and deservedly considered so.'² 'As a pure comic writer he may be weighed in the balance against any man in Europe, when he will not be found wanting.'³ 'With the exception of the first (and only the first) men of Italy and Germany, no foreign writer has given me greater delight. . . . He stands in the first

¹ Laing's *Journal* (1836), p. 142.

² G. R. Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians* (1840), vol. i, p. 236.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 143.

rank among his countrymen, in the second with the world in general.’¹ And Mr. Metcalfe added that the language was worth learning, even if only to be able to read Holberg’s plays.

More important than the travellers’ remarks was the account of Holberg given in William and Mary Howitt’s work *The Literature and Romance of Northern Europe* (1852), in which were also given translated scenes from *The Political Tinker*, *The Man without a Moment*, and *Don Ranudo*. Apparently without sufficient foundation, the authors suggested that a certain scene of *Don Ranudo* was the prototype of Scott’s Caleb Balderston.²

Holberg’s plays they rightly characterized as ‘invariably the advocates of sound sense and sound morals.’³ In the comic and satiric field ‘he was a great and unquestionable master. The entire demesne of actual life was his, and he occupied it bravely.’

By far the most detailed account of Holberg’s works was given in the *North British Review* for 1869.⁴ Here Holberg’s position was put in its proper light: ‘In him the reformer came—came with a power and energy that were equal to the cause for which he fought throughout a long life of severe and unremitting toil.’

All Holberg’s heterogeneous writings were taken up and separately dealt with. *Peder Paars* was said to surpass in some respects both Boileau’s *Lutrin* and Butler’s *Hudibras* in wit and humour, while *Niels Klim*, though an obvious imitation of *Gulliver’s Travels*, yet was judged to be of sufficient originality to entitle it to a very high position of its own in literature. As for originality and power, Swift’s work was given the preference. Yet *Niels Klim* was declared superior as a production of ‘infinitely wider range.’

¹ G. R. Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians* (1840), vol. ii, p. 144.

² *The Literature and Romance of Northern Europe*, vol. i, p. 366.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 376.

⁴ *North British Review*, 1869, vol. i, p. 440.

As for Holberg's indebtedness to Molière, it was readily admitted. But while Molière excelled in 'correctness and elegance of diction, in regularity of plot and perhaps also in delineation of character,' Holberg, according to the author, almost surpassed the French writer in comic strength and force.

Holberg's literary qualities were set down with great understanding and precision. Breadth and clearness of observation, calmness of reflection, and vivid perception of the humorous were said to be the three distinctive features of his genius. 'He knew how to separate . . . the accidental from the essential, the ephemeral from the eternal.' The drawings of his characters were likewise said to be done with great psychological skill and his *dramatis personae* always to be true to themselves in action and in language. 'Never,' the author wrote, 'did Holberg introduce pungent witticisms at the expense of dramatic consistency.'

If the author in his appreciation of Holberg did not go a bit too far, he was similarly right in stating his reservations. He justly declared Holberg's strength to lie in the region of the humorous, but his humour, he added, was never of the highest kind, never founded on that earnestness which will always be found with the greatest humorists: 'Of jest and irony, especially the latter, Holberg is, indeed, a consummate master, but these things, although springing from the humorous, are not properly the humorous itself.'¹ Although Holberg's humour as in the play of *Jeppe* may be said occasionally to rise to a pathos which almost brings it into touch with the tragic element, there is still, no doubt, a great deal of truth in

¹ This is in harmony with Schopenhauer's definition of humour as 'der doppelte Kontrapunkt der Ironie' (*Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, Bd. ii, Kap. 8: Zur Theorie des Lächerlichen).

Thus also Meredith: 'The stroke of the great humorist is world-wide, with lights of tragedy in his laughter' (*Essay on Comedy*, p. 84). And Professor Höffding in his book *Den Store Humor* (1916), especially in chapter v on 'The Tragic and the Humorous': 'Humour strives to combine the tragedy of life with its comedy' (p. 89).

this criticism. Less justifiable, however, does another objection, which the author made with regard to Holberg's literary qualities, appear to be :

‘ He [Holberg] never viewed himself as a poet, but as a moralist, and in his laudable zeal to fulfil the mission of the latter he not infrequently became so one-sided as to see in morals the sole thing worth striving after—a one-sidedness which derogated from the beauty and the value of some of his literary productions. Every work he penned . . . he contemplated more or less as ethic lessons embodied in diverse forms.’

All this is true if morality be taken in a wider sense and made to include what the author later spoke of as Holberg's ‘ large-hearted tolerance.’ But if he meant to regret Holberg's moral tendencies as reducing the literary value of his writings, another passage of his will seem inconsistent with this view :

‘ The morals which he [Holberg] made it the great business of his life to inculcate were in so far defective, that they were based on no profound religious principle, and therefore lacked the element of power, which invariably exists where faith is the fountain-source, and morality the stream that flows from it.’

Did the author believe that if Holberg's morals had been founded on ‘ a profound religious principle,’ his ‘ one-sidedness, which derogated from the beauty and the value of some of his literary productions,’ would have become at all less conspicuous ?

To this detailed criticism of Holberg was also added a translated extract from *Erasmus Montanus*, the whole of which play appeared two years later in *Fraser's Magazine*.¹

In a chapter on ‘ The Danish National Theatre,’ included in his *Studies in the Literature of Northern Europe* (1879), Mr. Gosse stated Denmark to be the only small country ‘ that has succeeded in founding and preserving a truly

¹ *Fraser's Magazine*, July 1871.

national dramatic art,' and maintained that a comparison between it and other lands 'of a cognate character'—among them Norway—at once would display 'a complete difference of individuality.' Whatever the merits of Danish dramatic literature be, the fact remains that both Holberg and Wessel were born Norwegians, and being representatives of the common literature of the two countries, they can by no means be excluded from the literary history of their native country. Speaking of Holberg, Mr. Gosse, however, calls him 'that most gifted of all Danes before or since, who more than any other man has succeeded in lifting his country into an honourable place among the nations.' In one place he calls the comedies of Holberg 'old-fashioned'; in another he speaks of them as showing 'no signs of losing their freshness,' as appearing 'astonishingly modern,' whereas his comic epics are said to have 'long ago gone the way of most such writing and are honourably unread in every gentleman's library'—this presumably being the lot assigned to them in the critic's own study. However, we are consoled with the highly interesting statement that Holberg was generally famous in Denmark as a 'brilliant writer on law and philology.'¹

In the *Spectator* for 1886² further appreciation was bestowed on Holberg :

'He fought long and bravely against pain, poverty, and neglect—he fought long and bravely for liberty and emancipation from blind bigotry and superstition. . . . While he introduced into his native land the stream of ideas from abroad, he, in fact, heralded a new century in a far-off corner of the earth, where time stood still. It is to the eternal honour of this brave man that, unaided, he achieved work so noble. . . . That such a man should

¹ In the article on Holberg contributed to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* Mr. Gosse writes: 'Neither Pope nor Swift . . . approached him [Holberg] in range of genius or in encyclopaedic versatility.'

² Suppl. February 6, 1886 (a review of Brandes, *Ludv. Holberg und seine Zeitgenossen*).

have lived and died neglected and misunderstood it is infinitely sad to remember.'

Another article on Holberg appeared in the *Saturday Review* for 1895¹ under the title of 'Holberg and Addison.' This was a review of Viljam Olsvig's book *The Great Turning-point in Holberg's Life*, the general tendency of which was partly to reduce Molière's influence on Holberg by pointing out Holberg's indebtedness to the English literature of the Augustan age.²

Apart from Holberg, Norwegian men of letters of the eighteenth century have always remained practically unknown in England. Mary Wollstonecraft, who visited Norway towards the end of that century, was wholly unaware of their existence. 'The Norwegians,' she wrote in her *Letters*, 'appear to me a sensible and shrewd people with little scientific knowledge and still less taste for literature.' But then it must be remembered that Tönsberg, the place where the authoress spent most of her time in Norway, was a small seaport which never at any time has been conspicuous for its literary pursuits. At this time, moreover, nearly all Norwegian authors were living at Copenhagen. Mary Wollstonecraft was, however, pleased to add that she believed the Norwegians to be 'arriving at the epoch which precedes the introduction of the arts and sciences.'³

Later travellers, though in some cases better informed than Miss Wollstonecraft, also chose to pass lightly over this period of Norwegian literature, Wessel being almost the only author whose name was found worthy to be mentioned. As the travellers seldom possessed acquaintance with the literature, their comments were generally without merit and do not as a rule call for attention. Thus

¹ *Saturday Review*, September 28, 1895.

² Cf. note 2, p. 82. A similarity between Holberg and Congreve and Vanbrugh had in England been pointed out by the *National Review* for January 1863.

³ Mary Wollstonecraft, *Letters on Scandinavia* (Cassell's Nat. Library ed., p. 65).

one of them,¹ wishing to praise Wessel, tried to achieve his object by attributing to him a work of Holberg.

The only notable account of Norwegian literature between the death of Holberg and the dissolution of the union was that given by William and Mary Howitt in their work *The Literature and Romance of Northern Europe* (1852).² They bestowed two pages on Tullin, gave a full account of Wessel and 'the Norwegian Society,' mentioned the writings of Edvard Colbjørnsen, Edvard Storm, Nordahl Brun, Jonas Rein, and Zetlitz, and devoted no less than eight pages to Christen Pram, pointing out some resemblances between him and Robert Southey.

Somewhat fuller accounts than those dealing with this period were given of the Norwegian literature that followed after the union with Sweden. 'When once Norway stands upon the high ground of independence,' Jens Wolff wrote in 1814,³ '... literature would no longer languish.' While Derwent Conway 'in 1829 still found 'literature of every kind at a very low ebb in Norway,' Samuel Laing in 1836, though he thought it possible that the state of society was not favourable to great mental exertion, as nothing could be gained by it,⁴ was nevertheless able to trace 'attempts which at last may reach excellence.'⁵ And in 1840 Mr. Latham stated

¹ Bowden's *Norway*, etc. (1867), p. 176.

² Reviewed by the *Eclectic Review*, 1852, vol. i, p. 592; by the *British Quarterly Review*, 1852, p. 425; by the *Dublin Review*, September 1852, p. 112.

The *Dublin Review*, in giving a picture of 'the Norwegian Society,' says that its members 'aspired to form themselves solely upon classical models and shuddered at the bare idea of original or national poetry.' For this statement, which is wholly and entirely the truth reversed, the Howitts' book gives no foundation.

³ Jens Wolff, *Sketches on a Tour to Copenhagen* (London, 1814), appendix xx. The author—according to Th. H. Erslew ('Supplement til alm forfatterlexicon' [1853])—was probably a son of Georg Wolff, a Norwegian (born 1736), who in 1783 established a banking house in London, 'Wolff & Dorville,' which became insolvent in 1818.

⁴ Derwent Conway, *A Personal Narrative*, etc., p. 249.

⁵ Laing's *Journal of a Residence*, p. 383. ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

that the Norwegians he talked with claimed 'boldly and unhesitatingly' that they had contributed their quota to the literature and science of Europe,¹ and as he did not dispute the statement, it must be supposed that he more or less adopted their views. Also Mr. Bremner (1840) was of the same opinion: admitting that literature did not appear to be in a flourishing state, he yet believed the Norwegians to be capable of attaining high stations in this walk, which he declared to be 'well proved by the example of their gifted countryman Steffens . . . who has long been one of the brightest ornaments of German literature.'² Mr. Bilton (1840) could record no achievements in literature or science³; while Mr. Latham (1840), better acquainted with the subject, paid handsome tributes to men like Wergeland, Heiberg, and Treschow. Yet it is astonishing to see the general standard of his book brought down by such hopeless puerilities as are his remarks on Abel. Here is the traveller's account of the mathematical genius, on which I trust no comment is needed: 'As many as two persons, out of a small acquaintance of mathematicians, have I met with in England that had heard of him. One of the writers in the *Penny Cyclopaedia* was not ignorant of him. That the feat was a great one I have no doubt, it being spoken of in Norway and recorded in England,'⁴ etc.

Through his personal friends Ludvig Kristensen Daa and Henrik Wergeland, Mr. Latham was not only introduced to contemporary Norwegian literature, but even brought into the very centre of its bustling life. Of these two men he remarks: 'Wergeland was most of a Gaul and Daa of an Englishman.'⁵ Of Wergeland he says: 'His friends made him the Byron of Norway: when I came to know him better, I scarcely agreed in the parallel.

¹ Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians*, vol. ii, p. 258.

² Bremner's *Excursions*, p. 62.

³ Bilton, *Two Summers*, vol. ii, p. 225.

⁴ Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians*, vol. ii, p. 259.

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 158.

He eschewed neckcloths and delighted not in watery potations. No likeness beyond this was discoverable. When I saw him for the first time he recalled to my mind the likenesses I had seen of Burns.’¹ Less happy is his characterization of Wergeland’s poetical position: ‘If I delighted in coining compounds after the manner of those who talk of Cromwell-Grandisons, etc., I should call him an Elliott-Ossian.’² What he, referring to Wergeland’s writings, says, ‘sunt bona, sunt quaedam mediocria, sunt mala,’³ is no doubt a true statement, which will usually prove correct with reference to most authors who have issued more than twenty works before they were thirty-five years of age. ‘When he chooses,’ Mr. Latham says, Wergeland’s versification is ‘remarkably easy and melodious.’⁴ ‘Much to his credit he leaves the classical measures to the classical writers, and seldom, if ever, perpetrates hexameters.’⁴ Yet, he is not blind to his faults: ‘Men that think in allegories must needs occasionally write obscurely.’⁵ And he justly complains of Wergeland’s occasional lack of melody.

‘Along the Nile was heard Osiris;
The Ganges, Chrishna, and in China, Folu,
The Tigris, Belus, and in Scythia, Odin,
In Celtica Tuisto, and in Hellas,
Dionysus, Heracles, Zeus, Saturnus.’

(‘Messiah,’ p. 239.⁶)

That a catalogue of proper names might be made poetical Milton has proved.⁷ But such a list as that just quoted is utterly ungraceful, and it may, indeed, be doubted whether it has ever been surpassed by any great poet, Walt Whitman alone excepted.

To give his readers some idea of Wergeland’s poetry, Mr. Latham translated certain parts of *The Creation—Man*

¹ Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians*, vol. i, p. 134.

² Ibid., vol. i, p. 135.

³ Ibid., vol. ii, p. 160.

⁴ Ibid., vol. ii, p. 162.

⁵ Ibid., vol. ii, p. 160.

⁶ Ibid., vol. ii, p. 162.

⁷ See, for example, *Paradise Lost*, i, 577 ff., iii, 35, 36.

—*Messiah*¹ and his poem 'The Constitution.'² But with an eye to the public, which had no previous knowledge of Wergeland's poetry, the writer would perhaps have acted more wisely in making a different selection.

Mr. Latham was the only Englishman of the first half of the nineteenth century who paid any notable attention to Norwegian literature after the separation from Denmark. Even a creditable work like William and Mary Howitt's *Literature and Romance of Northern Europe* (1852) had nothing to say about this period of Norwegian literature. When this book was published, Wergeland had been dead seven years. Yet his name appeared only among a list of inferior Danish authors, with the words 'a poet and dramatist' subjoined by way of explanation. Of Welhaven no word was mentioned, while a number of Danish and Swedish writers were dealt with at great length.

Exactly the same must also be said to be the case with the periodicals. Up to 1860 there is not the slightest allusion to contemporary Norwegian literature, while accounts of Tegner's, Ingemann's, and Oehlenschläger's works were given from time to time. Some sketches of Welhaven appeared, indeed, in *Temple Bar* for 1868, but no account of his life or writings was given until Mr. Gosse in 1872 published an essay on 'Norwegian Poetry since 1814.'³

This essay had the merit of introducing an almost entirely unknown subject to the English public. But apart from its good intention and the services it may have rendered in arousing interest in Norwegian literature, there is very little that is satisfactory about it. Mr. Gosse shows but a slight comprehension of what was the central background of national thought in Norway at the time, as he also often seems unable to distinguish fully between the truly Norwegian elements and those mixed up with Danish

¹ Latham, *Norway and the Norwegians*, vol. ii, pp. 164–8.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 105–7.

³ *Fraser's Magazine*, October 1872. The essay was later included in the author's *Northern Studies* (1879).

influences. Of Wergeland's genius he appears to have formed a very imperfect judgement, as he also is totally unaware of his national importance as a re-creator of Norwegian literature. When he says that 'of the voluminous writings of Wergeland, only his deathbed poems may be read in future times,' he is almost as wrong in his prophecy as he could be. The poems of Wergeland are studied by all students of literature and lovers of poetry, and the best of his prose is read in Norway for much the same reason that the prose of Milton is studied by the present generation in England. In his pages on Wergeland Mr. Gosse is further guilty of a great many inaccuracies, which can only be ascribed to an ignorance of elementary facts, and this better than anything else displays his limited knowledge of the subject. A few of these inaccuracies may be pointed out :

Mr. Gosse says that Wergeland was the son of a 'political pamphleteer who attained *some* prominence in the ranks of the popular party.'¹ Wergeland's father was, however, one of the best read and most intelligent men of his generation in Norway, one of the first who in his writings gave emphatic expression to Norwegian national feeling, a man who played a considerable part in the political life of his day—'one of the more prominent personalities in our young history.'²

Further, Mr. Gosse says : 'The father was one of the original members of the *Storthing*, and consequently the earliest years of the poet were spent at Eidsvold.' The *Storthing* never met anywhere but at Christiania, and the convention which met at Eidsvold (1814) was never called *Storthing*, but 'Rigsforsamling,' and the poet's stay at Eidsvold was only due to the fact that his father held a rectory at this place (from 1817).

¹ In an article in *Fraser's Magazine* for February 1874 ('The Present Condition of Norway') he calls Nicolai Wergeland 'one of the very *noisiest* of the politicians of that time.'

² Prof. Gerh. Gran, *Nordisk Aandsliv*, i hundrede Aar, ny serie 1916, p. 15.

Mr. Gosse speaks of Wergeland as writing under an 'Arabic pseudonym,' 'Siful Sifadda,' while the fact is that the name was transformed from 'Sulin-Sifadda,' the name of one of the horses of Cuchullin, in the songs of Ossian.

Jan van Huysum's Flowerpiece, the living beauty of which is wholly due to a penetrating love of nature expressed with all the tenderness of poetic language, is by Mr. Gosse assigned to the class of Wergeland's 'political poems,' which characterization is little better than it would be to call a worldly novel a book of prayer just because the author happens to be a Christian.

Further, Mr. Gosse writes: 'Having bought a small estate just out of Christiania, he [Wergeland] gave himself up to a passion for flowers and to a grotto of great size and ingenuity.' This is said to be about 1833. The 'estate,' however, was no more than a hut and a small garden, called 'Grönlien.' As for the passion for flowers, the poet had cherished it during his whole life. And further, there was no grotto at 'Grönlien'; that was at another house, which he bought at a later time (1841). This is only one of the many anachronisms occurring in these pages.

Finally, Mr. Gosse says that King Carl Johan, having deprived Wergeland of his office, 'repented of his haste and ordered the poet a certain pension from the State.' It was, however, from his privy coffer the King offered Wergeland the money.

Apart from Mr. Gosse's pages on Wergeland and those written by Mr. Latham thirty years before, no detailed account of the Norwegian poet has ever appeared in English. Although Mr. Archer declared that Wergeland and Welhaven were poets 'who, had they written in a more widely known language, might have obtained European fame,'¹ there is every reason to believe that their names are entirely unknown to the greater part of English students of literature to-day. Even writers concerned with the

¹ *Fortnightly Review*, September 1885, 'Norway To-day.'

subject failed to recognize their work. Thus Mr. C. F. Keary, the author of a book *Norway and the Norwegians* (1892), spoke of the poet 'Peter [!] Wergeland by name, who might best be compared with Longfellow [!] and whose popularity is greatest with the half-educated of which the reading class in Norway was then, and still [1892] is, mainly composed.'¹

In England a special interest was taken in Norwegian fairy-tales, on which subject an article appeared in *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal* for 1850.² In 1859 Sir George Dasent gave a selection of Asbjørnsen's and Moe's *Norske Folke-eventyr*.³ The reviewers drew attention to the great similarity between the Norwegian and the Scottish fairy-tales,⁴ as this had already been pointed out seven years earlier by William and Mary Howitt, who had taken the Norwegian 'folke-eventyr' to represent the class of all three countries: 'It is . . . amazing how many of the favourites of our childhood we meet with in these nursery stories of the Scandinavians.'⁵ 'They furnish one of the strongest evidences of our descent from Scandinavian blood.'⁶

¹ C. F. Keary, *Norway and the Norwegians* (1892), p. 360.

² *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, 1850, vol. ii, p. 123.

³ Reviewed in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, March 1859. When Asbjørnsen in 1871 sent out a new collection, this was reviewed by W. R. S. Ralston in *Fraser's Magazine*, 1872 (vol. ii, p. 629). At Asbjørnsen's death the *Athenaeum* for January 17, 1885, had an obituary memoir (by H. L. B.).

Another English translation of the fairy-tales (by H. L. Braekstad) appeared in London, 1881. The introduction was written by Mr. Gosse. The tales were described as 'wild plots full of strange Alpine blossoms and perfumed with the wind from the pine-forest.' 'In Asbjørnsen's tales the English reader will find in its quintessence the genius and temper of the Norwegian peasant.'

⁴ *Blackwood's Magazine*, March 1859, see esp. p. 374.

⁵ W. and M. Howitt, *Literature and Romance of Northern Europe*, vol. i, p. 223.

⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 245. Curiously enough, it was Dasent's translation from Asbjørnsen and Moe which caused J. F. Campbell to collect his *Popular Tales of the West Highlands* (1860), as it had been

It would be false to regard the English attention paid to Norwegian fairy-tales as an indication of a wider interest in modern Norwegian literature in general. It was essentially concerned with the interest taken in Old Norse literature and Scandinavian ballads. It sprang from the same source and was instigated by romantic sentiments rather than by any purely literary curiosity. As it happened, the accounts of the fairy-tales were to mark the last outcome of an English interest in *popular* Norwegian literature and language. After the appearance of the fairy-tales, that interest, which had been so strong during the earlier parts of the century, was brought to a standstill.

The works of Aasen,¹ Vinje, and Garborg were never properly noticed in England, and the general English curiosity about Norwegian popular literature has since been distinctly declining.

The interest in *modern* Norwegian literature was of a later date and was, as has already been said, only introduced by Mr. Gosse's essay in *Fraser's Magazine* for 1872. From that date during the rest of the century the number of English articles and essays on the subject has been constantly increasing. Broadly speaking, however, they have all confined themselves to four writers, the appreciation and criticism of whom will come on for discussion in the next chapters.

an Irish work which originally had suggested the idea to Asbjørnsen (Croften Croker's *Fairy Legends of the South of Ireland*), which work, however, Asbjørnsen read in the German translation by Grimm. For particulars see Moltke Moe, *Det nationale gjennembrud i Nordmaend i det 19de aarhundrede*.

For a review of Mr. Campbell's work see *Macmillan's Magazine* for 1861, vol. i, p. 213: David Masson, *Gaelic and Norse Popular Tales, an Apology for the Celt*.

¹ An obituary article on Aasen by Edmund Gosse appeared in the *Athenaeum* for October 3, 1896. It gave a brief account of Aasen's work: 'He was a very great man in his own limited sphere, and he has left an indelible mark on the linguistic history of his people.'

CHAPTER IV

BJÖRNSON, LIE, AND KIELLAND IN ENGLAND

BJÖRNSON, though introduced to the English public earlier than Ibsen, never got a firm footing in England. His stories of Norwegian country-life were indeed at one time much admired and widely read. But it may well be said that the reputation he gained by them was never surpassed, nor did his later dramas add much to his fame in England.

In 1861, three years after its original publication, a Norwegian translated Björnson's story *Arne* into English.¹ It was reviewed in the *Athenaeum* on April 26, 1862, in an article that prophesied that with Björnson a new era would begin in Scandinavian literature. This article introduced Björnson's name for the first time to the English public. It praised the story for its 'originality, purity, and simplicity,' and pointed out the resemblances of its style to that of the sagas.

Another review of *Arne* appeared in the *National Review* for January 1863, where Björnson was described as an author without great invention or wide knowledge of humanity, but endowed with a power of description that made the words recorded seem 'to glow with intense reality of experience.'

Three years later Augusta Plesner and S. Rugeley-Powers undertook an English translation of the same volume, introduced by an insignificant preface on the author. This time the lyrical pieces scattered through

¹ 'Although wonderfully good as the work of a foreigner, it is naturally enough disfigured by a few idiomatic blemishes' (*National Review*, January 1863).

the story were also rendered into English verse—not wholly unsuccessfully, as will be seen from the specimen given below :

‘ What shall I see if I ever go
Over the mountains high ?
Now I can see but the peaks of snow
Crowning the cliffs where the pine-trees grow,
Waiting and longing to rise
Nearer the beckoning skies.

Shall I then never, never flee
Over the mountains high ?
Rocky walls, will ye always be
Prisons until ye are tombs for me ?
Until I lie at your feet
Wrapped in my winding-sheet ? ’

Again the story was reviewed in the *Athenaeum* (September 22, 1866),¹ accompanied by a short account of Björnson’s earliest dramas. These, however, were said to lack ‘ the dramatic quality . . . of fortitude.’

Translations of *Övind*,² *The Fisher-maiden*,³ and *Synnöve Solbakken*⁴ followed, and gradually Björnson’s name began to be known in England.

The first important appreciation bestowed on him was given in a minute account of *Sigurd Slembe*, contributed to the *Contemporary Review*, December 1872, by Robert Buchanan.⁵ ‘ Björnson,’ he says, ‘ does not possess the power of imaginative fancy shown by Wergeland, . . . nor Welhaven’s refinement of phrase, nor the wild,

¹ Another review appeared in the *Scotsman*, September 1866.

² 1869, 1883, 1884, 1896.

³ 1870, 1871, 1884, 1890, 1896.

⁴ 1881, 1884, 1895. *The Bridal March*, 1884, 1893, 1896. Other editions were *Love and Life in Norway* (1871) and *Life by the Fells and Fjords* (1879).

Articles on Björnson’s stories are to be found in the *British Quarterly Review*, 1875, p. 364 ff.; *Saturday Review*, February 11, 1882; the *Spectator*, November 18, 1882.

⁵ Later reprinted as ‘ Björnson’s Masterpiece ’ in the author’s *Master Spirits* (1873).

melodious abandon of his greatest rival, the author of *Peer Gynt*, but, to my thinking at least, he stands as a poet in a far higher rank than any of these authors.' Unfortunately, Robert Buchanan has not yet been proved right when he prophesied that Björnson's reputation in England would rise very high, 'as one of the noble company of modern "masters."'

Two months earlier than this article Mr. Gosse had given a sketchy account of the Norwegian poet in a contribution to *Fraser's Magazine* (October 1872). This was later republished in the author's volume of *Studies in the Literature of Northern Europe* (1879), and some pages of severe criticism were added. Though Mr. Gosse admits that the poem 'Arnljot's longing for the Sea' is 'of the highest order of lyric poetry and worthy of Byron at his best,' he thinks 'Arnljot Gelline'¹ as a whole to be 'written in a jargon so uncouth that it is sometimes almost impossible to comprehend it.' (Might not this to some extent be due to a deficiency in the linguistic knowledge of the critic?) Speaking of Björnson's dramas, Mr. Gosse is still severer in his judgement. With *Sigurd Jorsalfar* Björnson is said to have 'tantalized and perplexed his readers.' *A Bankruptcy* is a 'poor piece in the German taste,' *The Editor* a 'powerful but rabid and unjustifiable personal satire,' while Björnson's 'ineptitudes' are said to have 'culminated in a democratic drama, *The King*, a really monstrous fiasco, unworthy of a poet of high reputation as a work of art, and, politically speaking, beneath discussion.' Björnson himself Mr. Gosse describes as 'rough, manly, unpolished, a young Titan, rejoicing in his animal spirits.'² Granting the critic every acknowledgement for the germs of truth in these statements, it cannot be denied that they give an exceedingly partial

¹ In the article on Björnson contributed to the present edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Mr. Gosse is inaccurate in saying that *Arnljot Gelline* contains the ode 'Bergliot.'

² In an article on Ibsen in the *Fortnightly Review*, 1873 (vol. i, p. 74).

picture of the author, for whose genius more exact words might have been found in the way of characterization.

However, Mr. Gosse was not the only English critic who condemned the social dramas of Björnson. The general objection raised against them was a complaint of their moralizing tendency: 'the dramatist approaches larger and more complex problems, his own position becomes less clear, the note of exclamation is supplanted by the note of interrogation, and the dramatic interest tends to merge in the philosophic; . . . speculation is evoked to the detriment of art.'¹ This view was also taken by the *Saturday Review* (February 24, 1894) in a notice of Mr. W. Wilson's translation of *Pastor Sang*; but the value of this article may be judged from the fact that the reviewer absurdly insists on regarding the play as 'a typical example of modern Norwegian comedy.'

Mr. C. F. Keary in his book *Norway and the Norwegians* (1892) has a few lines on Björnson, which, however, do not call for much attention. For a reason only known to himself he prefers to name the play *Between the Battles* by its Swedish title. His statement that *The Editor* is 'modelled on Ibsen's social dramas' shows his incompetence in the subject. A glance at a bibliographical list would have told him that at the time *The Editor* was published, Ibsen had not as yet written either *The Pillars of Society* or *An Enemy of the People*.

However, if Björnson still was not appreciated as he deserved in England, he was at least no longer unknown. The *Academy* for August 8, 1874, had contained a short notice of *The Editor* and *A Bankruptcy* even before these plays had been published at Copenhagen. When Björnson in October 1877 made his famous speech to the students at the University of Christiania, we find a notice in the *Saturday Review* (November 17, 1877), in which it is said that his defence, though 'deeply interesting,' yet 'fails to account for the deplorable decadence in style which

¹ *Macmillan's Magazine*, December 1889 ('The Later Plays of Björnson').

his later works display.' The writer of the notice expresses his regret that the poet has become desperately *doctrinaire*, and he hopes that time will restore his early exquisite taste and lyrical skill.

Mr. Gosse, who, in his *Studies in the Literature of Northern Europe* (1879), had passed such a severe judgement on Björnson's plays, showed a somewhat more lenient spirit in a review of *Leonarda* (*Academy*, September 27, 1879). Yet he insists on maintaining his earlier opinions, which, according to himself, had 'scandalized' critics in Germany and Scandinavia. But whether due to the influence of these same critics or to a reconsideration of his own views, Mr. Gosse's contribution of an introductory essay to the second edition of Miss Sutter's translation of *Synnöve Solbakken* (1895) will be seen to display a considerable variation from his original attitude. The characterization of *Magnhild* as 'a sickly and chaotic novel' has been reduced to that of an 'irregular and imperfect composition,' while 'the monstrous fiasco' of *The King*, 'unworthy of a poet of high reputation as a work of art, and politically speaking beneath discussion,' is actually replaced by the assertion that 'as the working out of a startling psychological problem, *The King* is worthy of high praise.' Likewise *The Editor* is no longer 'a rabid and unjustifiable personal satire,' but 'an extremely interesting and original work—faulty, indeed, in its daring realism, but full of cleverness and verve.' *Leonarda* is 'a creation of extraordinary beauty.' Since *Geography and Love* is commonly thought to convey more of Björnson's individuality, if only in a special sense, than any other of his plays, it is to be much regretted that Mr. Gosse does not supply the evidence for his interesting discovery that in that play 'the influence of Ibsen is strongly apparent—so strongly that the native manner of Björnson seems disturbed by it.' It is also a little hard to believe that the success which the novel *In God's Way* has enjoyed in Scandinavia should be 'founded on reflected warmth from its English admirers.' In Poole's *Index to Periodicals*

not a single reference to an English review of the book is given. That not all critics shared the warm admiration for the work spoken of by Mr. Gosse is shown by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, who described it as 'the laborious production of a man forcing himself still further and further from his right and natural bent.'¹

Towards the end of the essay, however, Mr. Gosse has some passages of true criticism, which may be worth quoting, as they in fact contain the gist of all the objections raised against Björnson as an author. Mr. Gosse writes :

'With such flashing insight, with so little need to lean upon experimental knowledge, he [Björnson] should have been pre-eminently an artist. But his whole effort seems to have been to quench the artist in himself and to urge into activity a prophet, a hieratic personage. . . . Ceaseless revolt is not a favourable attitude for poetical composition, . . . and Björnson would, in this year of grace (1895), be a more charming writer if he had gradually allowed the turbulent vehemence of his youth to evaporate, instead of carefully generating and feeding it.'

This is very true criticism, and especially it was so at that date, and it becomes the more true as it does not make the critic withdraw from his sentence of deserved recognition. 'What a persistent charm,' he exclaims, 'this vivid Norwegian writer preserves, what an odour of youth, what a breeze of delicious vitality !'

This, indeed, is as much as English criticism of Björnson amounts to. Björnson's fame in England, it can hardly be doubted, was considerably checked by the controversy and notoriety that arose about Ibsen's name. Comparisons between the two authors are frequently to be met with, and they are all to the same effect :

'Björnson seems to have less to say and less force in saying it than Ibsen, but possesses a lighter, gayer touch, more variety, and a sweeter temper. . . . If Björnson is occasionally more brilliant in the conduct of a single scene,

¹ *Adventures in Criticism* (1896).

Ibsen is almost always more successful in the architecture of an entire play.' ¹

If Björnson's works by now have nearly all been translated into English,² there is still reason to doubt whether they enjoy even a small circle of readers. This may partly be due to the fact that Björnson's style is much more difficult to render into a foreign language than, for instance, that of Ibsen.³ It is so impressed with the very characteristics of his native tongue, so inseparable from the firmness of its idiom, so rich with melody and full of freshness, that even the ablest translator could not render one of its beauties without failing to give some of the rest.

Whatever reputation Björnson may still hold with the English public, it is undoubtedly chiefly due to his earlier works, particularly to his peasant-stories. Having read the latter, George Meredith wrote of their author ⁴: 'He

¹ Mr. Edmund Gosse: a study of the writings of Björnson with Julie Sutter's translation of *Synnöve Solbakken* (1895). See also Mr. Gosse's article on Ibsen's social dramas (*Fortnightly Review*, 1889, vol. i, pp. 107 ff.). Mr. Havelock Ellis in *The New Spirit* (1890) says: 'He [Ibsen] is not loved in Norway as Björnson is loved, although B. in the fruitful dramatic activity of his second period has but followed in Ibsen's steps, just as Goethe was never so well understood and appreciated as Schiller.'

² His plays (translated by E. Björkman) were issued in two volumes, 1913-14; his comedies (trans. by Mr. R. F. Sharp), 1912; *Three Dramas* (trans. by Mr. R. F. Sharp), 1914. Most of his works were published separately during the later part of the nineteenth century. *A Gaumilet* was translated by H. L. Braekstad in 1891, and in 1894 by Mr. Osman Edwards. It was adapted by Mr. George P. Hawtreys and put on the stage, January 20-24, 1894. 'It was utterly unrecognizably different from the drama . . . published in 1883' (Mr. Archer, *Theatrical World* for 1894, p. 38).

Of *Sigurd Slembe* a translation by Mr. W. Morton Payne was published at Boston, 1888. Mr. Payne has also translated *Arnliot Gelline* (American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1917).

³ The *Saturday Review* (February 11, 1882) pointed out some bad mistakes occurring in Julie Sutter's translation of *Synnöve Solbakken* (1881); they were retained in the second edition, 1895. Yet the *Spectator* (November 18, 1882) complimented the translator on the way she had fulfilled her task.

⁴ Letter to Mr. Henry Baerlein, May 7, 1902.

is an artist, at times a poet, in description, fails in construction. . . . But I forgive him much for his raciness.'

Björnson's dramas, as we have seen, never made any strong appeal to the English taste. Even *Pastor Sang* did not meet with real appreciation; it was thought by Mr. Gosse to be 'profoundly suggestive and poetical,' yet a puzzling 'attempt to turn the theories of Charcot and Krafft-Ebing into drama by a writer of genius, who did not wholly understand them.'¹ The author's country tales, on the other hand, met with a favourable reception from the very first. The reasons of their immediate success are perhaps not very difficult to account for. The same sympathy which had shown itself in an enthusiastic glorification of the Norwegian country with its simple-minded population could not help welcoming these stories, in which were to be found 'all the brightness and simplicity, all the beauty and grace of the homely old Norwegian life, together with the mingled grandeur and gladness of the fair Norwegian land.'² It is of no matter in this respect whether Björnson's representation of the Norwegian peasant was a realistic picture or not, nor is it of any importance that the author himself later changed his opinion of his idyllic characters. To the English, at least, they meant a true picture of the proud kinsmen of the Vikings, whom they had learned to know through recent translations of the sagas and of whose descendants a number of books of travel had given most interesting and sympathetic records. 'I can believe that he [Björnson] is a faithful painter of Norwegian scenery and people,' George Meredith wrote in the same letter.³ The idyllic simplicity of the life painted in Björnson's stories could but charm readers 'too long experienced in the ways and words of heroines and heroes,' thinking it a delight 'to read of a walk in the field, which leads to nothing, of a

¹ Introduction to Miss Sutter's translation of *Synnöve Solbakken* (1895).

² H. de B. Gibbins in *To-day*, 1888.

³ Letter to Mr. Henry Baerlein, May 7, 1902.

talk, which ends neither in a fatal misunderstanding, nor in a declaration of love.' ¹

Few critics would agree with Mr. Archer in characterizing *Flags are Flying* as 'a work of extraordinary vigour, formless and full of crudities, yet brimming with vitality and uncompromising earnestness.' ² Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch thought the novel a less lifelike picture than *Arne* : 'The longer book,' he wrote, ³ 'is ten times as realistic in treatment, and about one-tenth as true to life.' Though an article in *Macmillan's Magazine* for December 1889 stated Björnsson's peasant-stories to be only of local interest and without European significance, it was with them that the author captivated his English public. Thus H. de B. Gibbins in an article in *To-day* (1888) expressed his opinion : 'It is the peasant-tales that will always cause him to be welcomed in foreign lands, and it is probably on these that his fame will find its surest foundation.' And taking the same view, Sir A. Quiller-Couch unhesitatingly stated that 'here the luck ended.'

Much less than Björnsson did Jonas Lie ever enjoy any reputation in England. Translations of his books appeared in Germany and America before they were known to the English public. To the last-named he was first introduced in 1873 by a small volume *Little Grey, the Pony of Nordfjord*, translated by the Hon. Mrs. Arbuthnot. When he was next heard of, it was through an American translation of *The Pilot and his Wife*. ⁴ A notice of this book, containing a lengthy quotation, was given by the *Dublin University Magazine* for October 1876, and the next year an English edition was published in London. The translator, Mr. G. L. Tottenham, thought it proper to cut out the whole introductory chapter of the story, but in spite of this, the book met with a favourable reception. Lie was compared

¹ The *Spectator*, November 18, 1882.

² 'Norway To-day,' *Fortnightly Review*, September 1885.

³ *Adventures in Criticism* (1896).

⁴ *The Pilot and his Wife*, trans. by Mrs. Ole Bull (Chicago, 1876).

with Björnson, his stories of life in Norway suggesting a natural comparison with the peasant-tales of the latter.

The Pilot and his Wife was reviewed in the *Athenaeum* (May 19, 1877)¹ in an article that praised the novel for its style and power and also for the strength and the beauty of the character-drawing: 'The polish and style and delicacy of observation . . . remind the reader of the precise, almost mannered writing of the author of *Madame Bovary*.' But of course, 'Lie is as fresh and wholesome as the great Frenchman is morbid and over-subtle.'

When Lie gave up the plain and homely charm of his early novels to deal exclusively with dark and difficult social problems, the *Saturday Review* (May 25, 1895), strangely enough, welcomed the change. The reviewer, who seems to have laboured under a false impression as to Lie's own position in society (he puts forward the theory that 'one must be a proletarian to understand the emotions of the gutter'), thinks that *One of Life's Slaves* proves that the author 'knows the shadowy places of life and the bitter imputations of social inferiority.' 'It is a wonderful expression of the proletarian view of things,' he further writes—'sad, with a touch of bitterness, but with rare gleams of sunlight . . . it is emphatically a book to set one thinking.'

The volume was reviewed together with Turgenev's *On the Eve*; and comparing the two works, the reviewer comments: 'Both, it is true, are great books, but Lie has the greater subject—he writes of those who live and suffer,' and he states *One of Life's Slaves* to be a production of 'amazing power and originality.'²

In 1885 two books of Alexander Kielland were translated

¹ Another review appeared in the *Examiner*, May 12, 1877.

² In 1892 a translation of *The Commodore's Daughters* (by Braekstad and Hughes) appeared; in 1893 a translation of *Weird Tales from the Northern Seas* (R. N. Bain); in 1894 a translation of *The Visionary* (by Jessie Muir) and a translation of *Niobe*; in 1895 *One of Life's Slaves* (Jessie Muir). Another translation of *Niobe* was published by H. L. Braekstad in 1897.

into English: *Skipper Worse* by the Earl of Ducie, and *Garman and Worse* by W. W. Kettlewell.

In the same year Mr. Archer contributed an article to the *Fortnightly Review* (September 1885), in which he drew attention to Kielland's 'minute and unflinching' faithfulness to fact and his 'clear, concise, and flexible' style. His writings, he observed, can 'scarcely be called pleasant . . . and still less amusing or exhilarating: enthralling is perhaps the nearest word.'

A short story by Kielland, 'The Battle of Waterloo,' was included the following year in a collection of Scandinavian stories, published by John Fulford Vicary under the title of *A Stork's Nest*.

In 1891 Mr. Archer translated some of Kielland's tales, and to this volume, which was called *Tales of Two Countries*, was added a critical introduction. Writing of the satiric bent of the author's disposition, Mr. Archer praised his vein of humour and declared that this was never allowed to run riot.

In spite of the marked tendency of the author's productions, he never, Mr. Archer says, 'obtrudes his own personality, never buttonholes the reader for an interlude of gossip. . . . Where he pauses in his narrative it is not to "moralize the spectacle," but to poetize or symbolize it.' Yet, 'the natural cast of Kielland's genius,' Mr. Archer observes, 'is tragic, almost pessimistic.'

The attention paid in England to the three Norwegian authors dealt with in this chapter was at no time a particularly remarkable one. In turning to the remaining great poet of the period, we shall find an interest, vastly different in dimensions as well as in intensity, which, as it were, completely counterbalanced the small consideration bestowed on his three compatriots.

CHAPTER V

HENRIK IBSEN IN ENGLAND ¹

§ 1. THE RECEPTION OF HIS PLAYS

THE honour of first introducing Ibsen to the English public belongs to Mr. Edmund Gosse, who in the *Spectator* for March 16, 1872, gave a review of Ibsen's poems, which he described as 'short songs of irregular measure after the manner of Heine.' The article was anonymous and can scarcely have attracted much notice. In a letter to Mr. Gosse,² in which he thanked him for his article, Ibsen declared the introduction of his works into England to be one of his 'fondest literary dreams.'³ 'I shall consider myself most fortunate if you decide to translate one or more of my books,' he wrote.⁴

For the time, however, Mr. Gosse confined himself

¹ See Appendix D.

² April 2, 1872.

³ 'Nor is there any nation to whose reading public I should feel it a greater honour to be made known than yours' (Letter to Mr. Gosse, April 2, 1872).

Though unfamiliar with the English language and no great reader of its literature, Ibsen on several occasions expressed his English sympathies: 'I regret ever more and more that I neglected at the proper time to learn to speak English. . . . I have been revolving many things in my mind lately, and one of the conclusions to which I have come, is that there are very strong traces in me of Scotch descent. But this is only a feeling—perhaps only a wish that it were so' (Letter to Mr. W. Archer, June 27, 1895). 'I should like very much to go to England, because English people and English books interest me strangely. . . . I would like to see such men as Gladstone and Salisbury, Herbert Spencer and Tennyson' (Mrs. Alec. Tweedie, 'Henrik Ibsen and Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson' in *Temple Bar*, July 1893).

⁴ Letter to Mr. Gosse, April 30, 1872.

to drawing attention to Ibsen's name by means of reviews in the periodicals.¹ To the *Spectator* for July 20, 1872, he contributed another anonymous article, an account of 'Peer Gynt,' the most interesting statement of which was a denunciation of 'the flippant judgment . . . passed on Ibsen as a merely "negative" satirist.' The analysis of the play, though by no means profound, was distinctly sympathetic, and though it referred to Solveig as a gipsy girl,² it was received by Ibsen in terms of heartiest gratitude: 'A better, clearer, and more sympathetic interpretation of my poem, I could not desire.'³

Meanwhile Mr. Gosse had resolved to devote himself to the introduction of Ibsen's works into England; though from the very beginning he was not unaware of the difficulties which such a task would probably imply.⁴

The following year, in an article in the *Fortnightly Review*,⁵ the first really important appreciation of Ibsen appeared. This time Mr. Gosse gave a minute analysis of *Love's Comedy* with a number of metrical translations. Ibsen himself he described as 'a soul full of doubt and sorrow and unfulfilled desire, piercing downward into the dark.' Referring to the absence of a contemporary world-poet, he wrote: 'It is my firm belief that in the Norwegian, Henrik Ibsen . . . such a poet is found.' Again he was rewarded by the poet's gratitude: 'I value your criticism,' Ibsen wrote,⁶ 'more than that of any of my other friends.'

¹ A review of *The Pretenders* appeared the same year in the *Academy* (referred to by Ibsen in a letter to Mr. Gosse, October 14, 1872).

² The only foundation for this allusion must be the place where Solveig's parents are spoken of as 'newcomers to the district.' The picture of a gipsy girl utterly encumbers and destroys the conception of the real Solveig of the play.

³ Letter to Mr. Gosse, October 14, 1872.

⁴ See his poem, 'To Henrik Ibsen in Dresden,' written in May 1872. (*On Viol and Flute*, 1873.)

⁵ *Fortnightly Review*, 1873, i, p. 74.

⁶ Letter to Mr. Gosse, February 20, 1873.

So far none of Ibsen's works had been translated into English.¹ In 1876 two books were issued, neither of which, however, could possibly draw much attention to the poet's name. The one was a booklet called *Translations from the Norse*, printed privately at Gloucester. The translator, Mr. A. Johnstone, rendered the first act of *Catilina* and parts of *Terje Vigen* into English with three of Ibsen's smaller poems. The translation possessed no great merits, and probably escaped notice.² Hardly more successful was the translation by Catherine Ray of *Emperor and Galilean* (1876).

Mr. Gosse for some reason still omitted to undertake a translation, and Ibsen had to suffer from the hands of well-meaning but incapable devotees. In 1880 a translation of *A Doll's House* by T. Weber was brought out at Copenhagen. It was the production of a Danish schoolmaster, who apparently possessed no more knowledge of the English language than that provided by a Danish-English dictionary.³

However, that same year *The Pillars of Society* was

¹ A translation of *Terje Vigen* by Mr. J. A. Dahl, which appeared in a small volume called *Norwegian and Swedish Poems*, printed in Bergen 1872, can hardly be counted.

² Mr. Johnstone, whose translation appeared anonymously, was a member of the British-Scandinavian Society, founded in London 1875. This society, the purpose of which was to interchange 'information as to travel, sport,' etc., as well as to 'stimulate interest' in the Scandinavian literature, history, and science, was advertised to possess 400 volumes of Scandinavian works and English works bearing on Scandinavia in 1876, a year after its foundation. Probably its vitality decreased, as I have met with no other reference to its existence. (Mr. J. A. Dahl, the translator of the volume of *Norwegian and Swedish Poems* [Bergen, 1872], is, however, said to have belonged to the society.)

³ See Mr. W. Archer in the *Theatre*, April 1, 1884. In another article (*Time*, January 1890), Mr. Archer gave a few specimens of the general standard of this translation :

'HELMER : You are first of all wife and mother.

'NORA : I no longer believe in that. I believe I am first of all a man. I as well as you . . . '

produced at the Gaiety Theatre in London¹ in a translation by William Archer. The performance seems to have been a success: 'Extremely fine comedy it is,' the *Athenæum* wrote,² 'and we shall be glad to know more of its author's workmanship.'

The following year Mr. Archer contributed an article to the *St. James's Magazine*,³ in which he zealously pleaded that the negativeness of Ibsen's problems did not mean any defect or limitation of the powers of the author. Mr. Archer, speaking of *The Pillars of Society*, said that 'it attains an almost tragic intensity of emotion, the great situation of the last act being of a thrilling force, one might almost say horror'; and this is a remarkable evidence how time has altered the impressions of that play. Mr. Archer himself has probably become conscious of this now. For in an article on 'Ibsen's Craftsmanship' (*Fortnightly Review*, July 1906), speaking of that same last act of *The Pillars of Society*, he calls it 'a somewhat cheap emphasis, which shows that the author is still intent on what may be called the external irony of picturesque antithesis.'

But in the eighties the impressions made by *The Pillars of Society* were considerably different. Few critics would share Robert Buchanan's opinion of the play, as he expressed it in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* (July 22, 1889): 'it was essentially a tragedy, it is in reality a farce.' Mr. Justin McCarthy, replying to the letter on the following day, considered it one of 'the most remarkable, the most absorbingly attractive, most vividly human plays' which he had ever come across. Thus also Mr. Gosse, who in an article in the *Fortnightly Review* for 1889, comparing the play with Björnson's *A Bankruptcy*, wrote: 'The interest in Björnson's play has faded, that in Ibsen's has increased.' No critic of the present day would agree with this statement. Whatever be the fate of Björnson's drama, *The Pillars of Society* no more arouses the interest

¹ December 15, 1880.

² *Athenæum*, December 25, 1880.

³ *St. James's Magazine*, February 1881.

of the readers, and the play, originally intended for a serious social drama, is now only successfully acted as a kind of comedy.

It is curious that *The Pillars of Society* on the whole met with a more favourable reception in England than any other of Ibsen's social plays. From a literary point of view it is decidedly the weakest. But then the moral is so beneficially obvious that its propriety cannot be questioned. 'There is enough sound doctrine and example of life and manners to make us all good men and women, if we will condescend to be preached to from a provincial text,' Sir Edward Russell justly remarked.¹ Nobody will deny that hypocrisy is a vice, that it is a base thing to accuse other people of one's own sins and to plan the death of one's own relatives. But very few people think themselves guilty of such monstrosities, and accordingly to those people, to whom the moral of a play is the first point in question, *The Pillars of Society* will always make a strong appeal. Ibsen 'seems greatest in *The Pillars of Society*,' Sir William Watson wrote,² 'because there the theme is a noble one.' No doubt it is more reasonable and truer criticism with the *Saturday Review* to declare it unfair to judge Ibsen's merits from the qualities of *The Pillars of Society*³ and to agree with Mr. Monkhouse that 'Consul Bernick belongs to the class of melodrama from which it should be the mission of realistic art to free us.'⁴

In 1882 Ibsen's *Nora* appeared in an English translation by Miss Lord accompanied by an introductory essay on Ibsen and the marriage question.⁵ Two years later an adaptation of the same play was performed at the Prince's Theatre in London.⁶ This drama, which was called

¹ Sir E. Russell, *Ibsen on his Merits* (1897), p. 63.

² In an essay on Ibsen in *Excursions in Criticism* (1893).

³ *Saturday Review*, March 22, 1890.

⁴ Allan Monkhouse, *Books and Plays* (1894).

⁵ Reviewed together with 'En Folkefiende' by William Archer in the *Academy*, January 6, 1883.

⁶ March 3, 1884.

Breaking of a Butterfly, was the production of Messrs. H. A. Jones and Henry Hermann, and had only a very slight similarity to its original. Dr. Rank and Mrs. Linden were eliminated from the play and replaced by other characters. Helmer's mother and sister were introduced. Helmer himself played the part of the ideal husband, taking upon himself the burden of the crime committed by his wife. The forged document, thanks to the generous interference of a grateful bank-clerk, was in the end happily restored to Nora, whereupon the curtain fell upon a scene of perfect domestic felicity. Mr. Archer¹ and Mr. Edward Aveling² at once pointed out the absurdity of describing this drama as founded on Ibsen's *Et Dukkehjem*. 'Ibsen on the English stage is impossible,' Mr. Archer wrote, not without bitterness, 'he must be trivialized'; and referring to a performance of *Ghosts*, which he had attended some time before, he wrote: 'It proved to me the possibility of modern tragedy in the deepest sense of the word, but it also proved the impossibility of modern tragedy on the English stage.'

Meanwhile a few more translations from Ibsen had appeared. And at last in 1888 three of his social dramas were published in the Camelot Classics, accompanied by an excellent introduction by Mr. Havelock Ellis.³ The translations were the work of Mrs. E. Marx-Aveling and Mr. William Archer, the latter from this time onwards devoting himself with singular perseverance to the task of making a way for Ibsen's dramas in England.⁴

In 1889 *The Pillars of Society* was given as a single performance at the Opera Comique.⁵ Mr. R. K. Hervey,

¹ In the *Theatre*, April 1, 1884.

² In *To-day*, 1884, i, p. 473.

³ Of these, according to Mr. Archer, 14,367 copies were sold up till the end of 1892. Of Ibsen's *Prose Dramas*, edited by W. Archer, 1890-1 (5 vols.), up till the same time 16,834 copies were sold (W. Archer, *Fortnightly Review*, July 1893).

⁴ At much the same date Count Moritz Prozor took up Ibsen's cause in France.

⁵ July 17.

in the *Theatre* (August 1), spoke of it as a 'remarkable play'; while in the *Academy* (July 27) Sir F. Wedmore confessed to have been able only with difficulty to sit through the performance. 'We are spared not a single dullness, not a single *longueur*,' he wrote; it 'is an estimable local product,' but 'to the London of to-day, to the Paris of to-day . . . it makes practically no appeal. . . . If puritanism of the duller and stupider kind still survives in Scandinavia—and I daresay it does—this mockery may be very desirable there. But to us it says nothing.'

Still more hostile was the criticism which followed the performance of *Nora* at the Novelty Theatre.¹ The 'play is by no means remarkable for either intellectual or dramatic force,' the *Spectator* declared.² 'It would be a misfortune,' the *Standard* wrote, 'were such a morbid and unwholesome play to gain the favour of the public.'³ 'It is simply as a mild picture of domestic life in Christiania that the piece has any interest at all,' the *Daily News* commented.⁴ 'Unnatural, immoral, and, in its concluding scene, essentially undramatic,' was the opinion of the *People*; while the *Pall Mall Gazette* took a different view: 'The opportunity of a week of Ibsen at the Novelty is one that nobody . . . should miss.' 'He [Ibsen] has drawn a woman such as many men have met—such as, indeed, most modern women are in some degree,' Mr. R. K. Hervey wrote in the *Theatre*.⁵ A very different opinion from that held by Mr. Clement Scott,⁷ who regretted that such a 'foolish, fitful, conceited, selfish, and unlovable' woman should be allowed 'to drive from the stage the loving and noble heroines, who have adorned it and filled all hearts with admiration from the time of Shakespeare

¹ On June 7, 1889.

² The *Spectator*, June 22, 1889.

³ Quoted from Mr. Archer's article in the *Fortnightly Review*, July 1893.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Pall Mall Gazette*, June 8, 1889.

⁶ The *Theatre*, July 1, 1889.

⁷ *Ibid.*

to the time of Pinero.' 'We regard it as a play that is, on the whole, misleading and mischievous in drift,' the *Spectator*¹ wrote, 'especially as it teaches . . . that the way to improve life is to root up the good wheat that has begun to grow, because there are tares intertwined with it.'

The character of Nora was, as we have seen, very differently judged. To Mr. George Moore she seemed 'hard, dry, mechanical, and illogical'²; the *London Quarterly Review* declared her to be 'as much of a moral monstrosity as any Byronic Corsair or Giaour, Alp or Manfred.'³ 'It is hard to conceive a less ideal character,' the *Spectator* wrote. While in Mr. William Archer's opinion 'she was 'one of the most sympathetic and exquisite figures in modern fiction.' Mr. Arthur Symons likewise regarded her as 'the most wonderful piece of character-drawing that Ibsen has ever done.'⁴

It is useless to go into further details of the criticism which *A Doll's House* provoked in England. The struggle, which was of the same character as that which had followed the play all over Scandinavia and Germany years before, was carried on with the fiercest vehemence from both sides. 'Those who dislike Nora are those whose view of marriage the play utterly destroys,' Miss Lord had written as early as 1882.⁵ But when the play was put on the stage (1889), it appeared that it was that view of marriage which was prevalent among the majority of the critics.

Most of them, indeed, went so far as to admit that Nora was right in resenting the treatment by her husband and right also in her claims for intellectual independence. But Mary Gilliland was alone in maintaining that the

¹ The *Spectator*, June 22, 1889.

² *Impressions and Opinions* (1891).

³ *London Quarterly Review*, July 1892.

⁴ *St. James's Magazine*, February 1881.

⁵ *Universal Review*, 1889, p. 567.

⁶ Introduction to *Nora*.

children could better do without the mother's personal tenderness than without the example of her courage and her truth.¹ Nearly all other critics agreed in condemning Nora's decision to leave her husband and children to devote herself to the cultivation of her own individuality. Indeed, so unsatisfactory was the conclusion of the play felt to be, that several authors actually ventured to write sequels to it. Sir Walter Besant, in the *English Illustrated Magazine* for January 1890, wrote a story 'The Doll's House and After,' in which Helmer was represented as a drunkard and Nora as an author of bad novels.²

Nor was the conclusion rejected only on moral grounds. Nora's decision to sacrifice everything for the free development of her personal individuality was judged to be essentially 'inartistic.' In Ibsen 'the moralist so far triumphs over the artist,' the *Saturday Review* wrote,³ 'that he has gone some way to spoil a very beautiful play in order that he may help to restore to women . . . the human dignity of which they have been arbitrarily deprived.' Views like these, as Mr. Archer justly pointed out,⁴ rose from the misconception of treating Nora's arguments 'as though they were the ordered propositions of an essay by John Stuart Mill.' Ibsen's originality, Mr. Archer pleaded, 'lies in giving intense dramatic life to modern ideas. . . . There never was a less systematic thinker. . . .' It is an absurdity to look for a logical argument in every sentence. First of all Ibsen is a poet, picturing scenes of human pathos. Maintaining this view, Mr. Archer applied it to the speech, perhaps the most famous

¹ *Ibsen's Women*—a lecture (1894).

² To this sequel Mr. Bernard Shaw wrote another called 'Still After the Doll's House' (*Time*, February 1890).

Another sequel was written by Mrs. E. Marx-Aveling. In America Mrs. Chesney wrote a sequel, 'Nora's Return,' according to which Nora becomes a nurse and attends to Helmer during an epidemic of cholera. (Other sequels had earlier appeared in Germany and Scandinavia.)

³ *Saturday Review*, June 29, 1889.

⁴ *Fortnightly Review*, 1889, ii, p. 30.

in the play; Helmer says: 'No man sacrifices his honour even for one he loves,' and Nora returns: 'Millions of women have done that.' 'Logically,' Mr. Archer remarks, 'it is naught—dramatically one feels it to be a master-stroke.'

To the critics, who condemned Dr. Rank's conduct to Nora and even raised a cry for the intervention of the Licensor of Plays,¹ Mr. Archer proved successfully that 'even from the most conventional point of view' it is impossible to find anything inadmissible in it.

On the whole, the indignation of the moralizing critics shot far ahead. The objections against the psychological defects of the play were drowned in a storm of confused ethical discussions. Comparatively small attention was paid to the unquestionably weak point of the play, pointed out by the *Saturday Review*,² that it was 'difficult to believe that a young woman with such infinite, latent possibilities should have been content to remain on a diet of macaroons and white lies for eight years of married life.' It is impossible to argue against this objection. Nor is it possible to claim with Mary Gilliland³ that the catastrophe was necessary. For, as the *London Quarterly Review* observed,⁴ 'characters do not so totally transform themselves in real life, nor do their changes come about with such pantomimic suddenness.' Mr. Allan Monkhouse, who considered Nora 'a charming character uniting frivolous habits to greatness of heart,' also found her conversion little short of a miracle: 'when, under pressure of the necessity for the inevitable didactic issue,

¹ *Saturday Review*, June 29, 1889.

² *Ibid.*, June 29, 1889.

³ *Ibsen's Women*—a lecture (1894).

⁴ *London Quarterly Review*, July 1892.

⁵ It is certainly difficult to understand what Mr. W. L. Courtney in the *Quarterly Review* (1891, vol. i, p. 305) meant by speaking of the 'want of development' in Ibsen's characters. Bernick in *The Pillars of Society* and Nora in *A Doll's House* are both instances of a most thoroughgoing and complete revolution in character. While characters as Rosmer, Rebecca, Hedda, and others, though

she suddenly discards nature and habits . . . she is no longer a human being, but a moralist's puppet.' ¹

However, as has been already said, it was not the psychological shortcomings of the play that were most heavily censured, but the moral attitude of the heroine. Critics kept on denouncing the character of Nora, and—by a curious contradiction—even denied the probability of such a marriage in modern civilized society.² 'If Ibsen were an Englishman . . . I should say that he was provincial,' Sir F. Wedmore wrote in the *Academy*,³ ' . . . I should say that he was suburban.'⁴ 'If there are few Dolls' Houses in England,' Mr. Archer retorted, 'it is certainly for lack of Noras, not for lack of Helmers.'⁵

A Doll's House had caused the first important encounter between Ibsen's enemies and his admirers. As far as soundness of argument was concerned, the result was a decided victory for the latter. But the animosity once created could not be silenced, and when confronted with plays like *Rosmersholm*, *Ghosts*, and *Hedda Gabler*, the critics, whose opinions were backed by solidly established prejudices, once more gave vent to their moral indignation.

Rosmersholm, a translation of which had first appeared in 1889,⁶ was the occasion of the second outbreak of these furious assaults. The play was put on the stage in February 1891 and was at once received by a storm of invective. The *Saturday Review*, which had already the year before declared that Ibsen here had crossed the bounds

their doom is foreshadowed by a latent disposition in their nature, are constantly developing themselves towards their sinister and inevitable fate.

¹ Allan Monkhouse, *Books and Plays* (1894).

² 'The grotesque improbability of the piece' (*London Quarterly Review*, July 1892).

³ *Academy*, June 5, 1889.

⁴ The same accusation of provinciality and suburbanism was repeated by the *Quarterly Review*, 1891, i, p. 308.

⁵ *Fortnightly Review*, 1889, ii, p. 30.

⁶ *Rosmersholm*, translated by Mr. L. N. Parker.

of sanity altogether and landed his readers in a lunatic asylum,¹ now welcomed the production of the drama at the Vaudeville Theatre as another chance of abusing the play and its author: 'the whole affair is provincial and quite contemptible,' it wrote.² Every character in the play, every idea expressed in it, was exposed and ridiculed. The pathetic figure of Ulrik Brendel was indicated to represent a plea for drunkenness: 'the pre-Ibsenite notion was that the drunkard showed courage by resisting drink, but this could not have been the emancipated drunkard.' The atmospheric shadow of the inevitable catastrophe, which is suggested by Rosmer's belief in the doomed race-ideal of his family, was made out to be the advocate of an immoral principle, proclaiming the irresponsibility of human beings for their dispositions: 'All the blame, in fact, is traceable to some protoplasmic germ that sat at the edge of a pond thousands of years before and got wicked.'

As for the catastrophe itself, it was found ludicrous. 'Was there an inquest?' the same review asked. 'Probably both their bodies were recovered and the coroner's jury can only have found that they committed suicide in a state of temporary insanity.'

The rest of the press was scarcely more favourable: 'Ibsen is a local or provincial dramatist,' the *Times* wrote; 'nothing but a compiler of rather disagreeable eccentricities,' the *Standard* declared; 'brain-sick extravagances' and 'silly sayings' were the opinions of two other well-known papers.³ 'Mr. Ibsen does not call *Rosmersholm* a farce, but that is because of his modesty,' the *St. James's Gazette* reflected.⁴

¹ *Saturday Review*, January 4, 1890.

² *Ibid.*, February 28, 1891.

³ *Daily News and Evening News*.

⁴ These quotations are taken from Mr. Archer's article 'The Mausoleum of Ibsen' (*Fortnightly Review*, July 1893), and illustrate the usual not very elevated tone of the Ibsen controversy in those days. It is, however, astonishing to see the same sort of flippancy

Other critics took up the defence, pointing out the dramatic force of the play and its singularly interesting study of character.¹ Thus Mr. L. Simons, in giving a minute and appreciative analysis of the play, described it as 'the tragedy of modern humanity.'² 'To have felt this struggle,' he wrote, 'to have painted it out with such infinite tenderness and sympathetic sadness, renders Ibsen the tragic poet, who represents the very best of our generation.' Mr. Bernard Shaw in the *Saturday Review* called *Rosmersholm* 'the most enthralling of all Ibsen's works'³; and Sir Edward Russell declared that he had 'never found any tragedy more really tragic.'⁴

But the majority of critics flatly declared it destitute of all merits; the dramatic-artistic part was neither new nor original,⁵ and the characters at the best only a study in insanity.

Several writers also took an absurd delight in refusing to see anything more in the play than a picture of party warfare, showing the antagonisms of Norwegian society at the time of the political crisis of 1884.⁶ However, this view was probably due not so much to any incapacity

reappearing at a time when the strife was all ended. As late as 1902 a contributor to the *Contemporary Review* (vol. i, p. 709) (Mr. A. M. Butler) wrote of *Rosmersholm*: 'The Pastor here is Rosmersholm [!] himself, a nobleman after the Norwegian meaning of the word [?], and as far as the sixteen comedies [?] show, the only gentleman whom Ibsen has essayed. . . . Brilliant wickedness the intellectual sinner may pardon; to the dull transgressor he owes no mercy. The play is a failure pure and simple.'

¹ 'Rebecca . . . one of the most remarkable creations in Ibsen's gallery of women' (Prof. C. H. Herford in the *Academy*, January 18, 1890).

² *Westminster Review*, 1893, vol. ii, p. 506.

³ G. B. Shaw, *Dramatic Opinions and Essays*, vol. i, p. 55.

⁴ Sir Edward Russell and P. C. Standing, *Ibsen on his Merits* (1897), p. 59.

⁵ *Saturday Review*, January 4, 1890.

⁶ Thus C. F. Keary in *Norway and the Norwegians* (1892), p. 370; Mr. Oswald Crawford, *Fortnightly Review*, 1891, i, p. 725; *Temple Bar*, 1891, iii, p. 97.

to recognize the suitability of the political discussions to illustrate the intellectual position of Rosmer and to deepen the mutual relationship between him and Rebecca,¹ as it was due to a deliberate refusal to do so.²

Only three weeks after the production of *Rosmersholm*, *Ghosts* was given as a single performance at the Royalty Theatre in London.³ This play had been first translated by Miss Lord in 1885, but several other editions had appeared during the following years. Miss Lord, in an introduction to her translation of the play (1890), had expressed the greatest admiration for its genius—only regretting that Ibsen had not made Mrs. Alving prevent the fatal disease of her son by treating him according to a method explained by Miss Lord herself in a book on Christian Science Healing. The work was commented on in the periodical press in exceedingly complimentary terms. Mr. R. Farquharson Sharp called it, indeed, ‘an offence against good taste in dramatic art.’⁴ But in the opinion of Mr. Arthur Symonds its painfulness was justified ‘from the moral point of view by the “purpose,” from the artistic point of view by the unquestionable power of it.’⁵ Mr. Havelock Ellis regarded it as a ‘wonderful play’ in which Ibsen had reached the highest point of his art⁶; and Mr. Archer declared that no other modern play seemed to fulfil so entirely the Aristotelian ideal of ‘purging the soul by means of terror and pity.’⁷ Mr. Gosse also bestowed praise on it as one of the most ‘thrilling and amazing works in modern

¹ ‘The plot of *Rosmersholm* . . . serves Ibsen as a substructure . . . for a veritable soul’s tragedy’ (A. B. Walkley, *Playhouse Impressions* [1892], p. 56).

² *Beata*, by Mr. Austin Fryers, an adaptation for the stage in three acts of the published drama entitled *Rosmer of Rosmersholm*, was produced at the Globe Theatre, April 19, 1892. [See the *Theatre*, May 1, 1892.] See ch. v, § 3.

³ March 13, 1891.

⁴ The *Theatre*, January 1, 1889.

⁵ *Universal Review*, 1889, p. 567.

⁶ Mr. Havelock Ellis in *The New Spirit* (1890).

⁷ *Fortnightly Review*, 1889, ii, p. 30.

literature.’¹ ‘If anything exists outside Aeschylus and Shakespeare,’ he wrote, ‘more direct in its appeal to the conscience, more solemn, more poignant than the last act of *Ghosts* I at least do not know where to look for it.’ Of a performance of *Ghosts* at the Théâtre Libre in Paris Mr. George Moore gave an enthusiastic account: ‘What shall I say, what praise shall we bestow upon a situation so supremely awful, so shockingly true?’² Also Mr. Allan Monkhouse, although objecting to Oswald and Regina as ‘horrible exceptions,’ found praise for the play, thinking Mrs. Alving to be ‘one of the strongest, most convincing, and most lifelike of Ibsen’s women.’³ The majority of English critics, after having attended a single performance of the play, chose, however, to flood the press with insidious calumnies, to no other purpose than to exhibit their own frantic rage.

Mr. Archer had the happy idea to collect some specimens of their ‘criticisms,’⁴ and agreeing that he was right in believing them not to be without historic interest, I may be allowed to reproduce a selection from them. A very strange document it will be found, remembering it to be the average expression of what was believed to be the critical élite of a nation, commonly understood to be the most self-controlled in the world.

‘Ibsen’s positively abominable play . . . this disgusting representation . . . an open drain . . . a dirty act done publicly, a lazar-house with all its doors and windows open . . . candid foulness . . . gross, almost putrid indecorum . . . literary carrion . . . crapulous stuff’ (*Daily Telegraph* [leading article]).

‘Naked loathsomeness’ (*Daily News*).

‘A repulsive and degrading work’ (*Queen*).

‘Morbid, unhealthy, unwholesome, and disgusting story’ (*Lloyd’s*).

‘Merely dull dirt long drawn out’ (*Hawk*).

¹ *Fortnightly Review*, 1889, i, p. 107.

² *Impressions and Opinions* (1891). ³ *Books and Plays* (1894).

⁴ *Pall Mall Gazette*, April 8, 1891 (partly reprinted in Mr. Shaw’s *Quintessence of Ibsenism* [1891]).

‘Lugubrious diagnosis of sordid impropriety . . . maunderings of nookshotten Norwegians’ (W. St. Leger in *Black and White*).

‘Garbage and offal’ (*Truth*).

‘Putrid play’ (*Academy*).

‘Nastiness and malodorousness laid on thickly as with a trowel’ (*Era*).

So much for the play. But also its author was submitted to the same kind of treatment.

‘An egoist and a bungler’ (*Daily Telegraph*).

‘Not only consistently dirty, but deplorably dull’ (*Truth*).

‘A teacher of the aestheticism of the Lock Hospital’ (*Saturday Review*).

Even the audience had to take their share of responsibility :

‘Ninety-seven per cent. of the people who go to see *Ghosts* are nasty-minded people’ (*Sporting and Dramatic News*).

‘Effeminate men and male women.¹ . . . They all of them . . . know that they are doing not only a nasty but an illegal thing’ (*Truth*).

The honour of having brought this deluge of invective to its height must be conferred on *Truth*, which for three months kept up a course of persecution. The articles are commonly understood to have been written by Mr. Clement Scott. A few quotations will indicate their general character² :

‘The decent householder puts his garbage and offal outside the door to be taken away by the scavenger in

¹ Clement Scott is understood to be the author of this article. He was the prototype of Cuthbertson in Bernard Shaw’s play *The Philanderer*. To be admitted to the Ibsen Club in this play, a woman has to get a member to guarantee her as unwomanly, and a man find someone to guarantee him as unmanly. (See acts i, ii.)

² Quoted from Mr. Archer’s article, ‘The Mausoleum of Ibsen,’ *Fortnightly Review*, July 1893.

the morning. But some well-bred and educated dog is sure to rout over the pile and to bury his nose in the nastiest morsel. . . . Outside a silly clique there is not the slightest interest in the Scandinavian humbug. . . . They know it is nasty, and they pretend to conceal their love of nastiness with a love of literature. Literature forsooth ! where, may I ask, is a page of literature to be found in the whole category of Ibsen's plays ? . . . Ibsen . . . a crazy, cranky being who has derived his knowledge of life from some half-civilized Norwegian village.'

And having proceeded in this way for several months, Mr. Scott at last, in the middle of June, thought fit to congratulate himself on the success of his warfare, by declaring that ' Old Ibsen is as dead as a door-nail.'

These are not the only attacks which followed the production of *Ghosts*.¹ But to give more specimens could be to no other purpose than to exhaust the vocabulary of abusive words in the language.

Ibsen's devoted friends abstained from any active defence while the struggle lasted. They had given their opinions on the subject at an earlier date, and to repeat them now could be of no avail. The only thing to do was done by Mr. Archer—to collect the ' gibberings ' of the fanatic critics, and, if not to convince them of their absurdity, at least to expose their vulgarity. ' Who can carry on a rational discussion,' Mr. Archer wrote, ' with men whose first argument is a howl for the police ? ' There was nothing else to do than to wait for time to alter the situation, to wait for the moment when Ibsen's genius would have to be acknowledged, or at least the date when his plays could be estimated soberly and without prepossession.

But that time had not come yet. On April 20, 1891—less than a month after the production of *Ghosts*—*Hedda Gabler* was given at the Vaudeville Theatre.² It was a

¹ Merely to refer to a few more: *London Quarterly Review*, July 1892; the *Theatre*, April 1, 1891 ; Mr. O. Crawford in the *Fortnightly Review*, 1891, i, p. 725.

² Produced by Miss E. Robins and Miss Marion Lea.

brilliant performance and was received with great enthusiasm by the audience. Mr. Gosse called Hedda 'one of the most singular beings' whom Ibsen had created.¹ 'Against every presumption,' Henry James wrote, Ibsen makes the play 'live with an intensity of life.'² It is a 'masterpiece of piquant subtlety, delicate observation, and tragic intensity,' Mr. Walkley declared.³

From the hostile camp, however, a new volley of invective and calumnious epithets was hurled against the play.

'What a horrible story! What a hideous play!' the *Daily Telegraph* wrote. 'Utterly pessimistic in its tedious turmoil of knaves and fools,' the *People* commented.⁴ 'Insidious nastiness of . . . photographic studies of vice and morbidity,' the *Saturday Review* joined in.⁵ 'Here is realism exhibited in the most extravagant and possibly its most shameless form,' Mr. W. L. Courtney wrote in the *Quarterly Review*.⁶ 'Superfluity of naughtiness and imbecility as this is past all tolerance,' Mr. Oswald Crawford proclaimed in the *Fortnightly*⁷; while Sir William Watson, with whom *The Pillars of Society* had found a certain favour, declared the 'fundamental conception' of *Hedda Gabler* 'altogether worthless,' and regretted that Ibsen here had fallen into 'the crudest banalities of detail and workmanship.'⁸

A contributor to *Temple Bar*⁹ had the frankness to admit

¹ *Fortnightly Review*, January 1891.

² *New Review*, June 1891 (reprinted in *Essays in London and Elsewhere* [1893]).

³ A. B. Walkley, *Playhouse Impressions* (1892), p. 62.

⁴ Quoted from Mr. Archer's article 'The Mausoleum of Ibsen' (*Fortnightly Review*, July 1893).

⁵ *Saturday Review*, April 25, 1891.

⁶ *Quarterly Review*, 1891, i, p. 305. The article was later reprinted in the author's volume *Studies at Leisure* (1892). In his book *The Idea of Tragedy* (1900), Mr. Courtney described the play as a 'triumphant masterpiece of squalid obscurity with all its incisive analysis of a petty woman's soul' (p. 123).

⁷ *Fortnightly Review*, 1891, i, p. 725.

⁸ Sir W. Watson, *Excursions in Criticism* (1893).

⁹ *Temple Bar*, 1891, 3, p. 97.

that the picture of Hedda was that of a real woman, but refused to admire the play.

The *Theatre* found parts of it bordering on the ludicrous.¹ 'Ibsen has no idea of the gentleman, still less of a gentlewoman,' the *Saturday Review* declared,² as if art should necessarily be restricted to these two comparatively small categories of humanity. Even the power of constructing a drama was denied him. To most writers the play appeared entirely incomprehensible as well as morally unjustifiable. 'For sheer unadulterated stupidity, for inherent meanness and vulgarity, for pretentious triviality,' Robert Buchanan wrote, '... no Bostonian novel or London penny novelette has surpassed *Hedda Gabler*.'³

A number of critics misread the character of Hedda, taking her to be a passionate and even voluptuous woman. Thus Mr. Shaw tells us that some of them actually believed Lövborg to be the father of Hedda's child, as they before had made Pastor Manders out to be the father of Oswald Alving.⁴ 'In her [Hedda's] breast, with its sickly indifferentism,' Mr. Gosse rightly pointed out,⁵ 'love awakens no sympathy,' or as Mr. Allan Monkhouse wrote: 'There is nothing so human about her as a passion.'⁶

In the same way Hedda's suicide was judged to be a psychological improbability, the *Saturday Review* ascribing it solely to Eilert Lövborg's failure to 'die beautifully': 'Had Lövborg's pistol carried a few inches higher, she would probably have consented to live, and would in due time have found her way to the Divorce Court.'⁷

¹ *Theatre*, May 1, 1891.

² *Saturday Review*, April 25, 1891.

³ Quoted from Sir Edward Russell and P. C. Standing, *Ibsen on his Merits* (1897), p. 120.

⁴ Bernard Shaw, *Quintessence of Ibsenism* (1891), p. 160.

⁵ *Fortnightly Review*, January 1891.

⁶ Allan Monkhouse, *Books and Plays* (1894). Thus also Sir Edward Russell in *Ibsen on his Merits* (1897), p. 16, and E. Dowden, *Contemporary Review*, 1906, vol. ii, p. 652.

⁷ *Saturday Review*, April 25, 1891.

Thus failing to grasp the essential part of Hedda's character, being unable to see that her death was the natural consequence of a life with which she was utterly bored and into which she had tried to introduce elements of excitement by endeavouring to influence the fates of other human beings, endeavours which had only left her the more disgusted with her existence, the critics missed the key to the tragedy, and consequently its merits escaped their notice. But as Mr. L. Simons observed: 'If a man has never seen a river or the sea, and is unaware of the existence of these phenomena, how could he recognize the water in the outlines of an etching?'¹

Three weeks after the production of *Hedda Gabler*, *The Lady from the Sea* was put on the stage at Terry's Theatre.² This play had been considered by Mr. Gosse to be 'one of the brightest jewels in the poet's crown.'³ But not even the staunchest of Ibsen's admirers could be brought to endorse that statement. Henry James regarded it as much the weakest of Ibsen's plays,⁴ and the same opinion was also held by Mr. Walkley.⁵ Even Mr. Archer later admitted that the play fell somewhat below Ibsen's highest level.⁶ The charge brought against it was a complaint of the way in which realism and romance were mingled. Besides, the problem, suggesting a natural comparison with that of *A Doll's House*, could only be found flat and its solution without psychological interest. 'The mermaid-wife and her Yankee merman are embodied dreams,' Mr. Walkley wrote. The play on the whole seemed more fantastic and less real than its predecessors, though Mr. Shaw seemed

¹ *Westminster Review*, 1893, ii, p. 506.

² May 11, 1891.

³ *Fortnightly Review*, January 1889. Also a later writer, Mr. A. M. Butler (*Contemporary Review*, 1902, vol. i, p. 709) was of the same opinion: '... Ibsen is here in fleeting moments at his best.'

⁴ *New Review*, June 1891 (reprinted in *Essays in London and Elsewhere* [1893]).

⁵ *Playhouse Impressions* (1892), pp. 65-7.

⁶ *Fortnightly Review*, July 1906.

to believe that this difference was not likely to strike a Norwegian audience so much as an English one.¹

However, it would have been natural to expect that the same defects, which were thus pointed out by Ibsen's more favourable critics, should have made a special appeal to his assailants. Here at last was a play with a moral to their liking, a play with a happy ending.

But the drama was only given five times and failed to attract much notice. Though 'as a reading play *The Lady from the Sea* is poetic, imaginative, and interesting,' the *Theatre* wrote, '... it ... proved in representation the most disappointing of any of Ibsen's yet seen in England.'²

In one respect, however, it was a favourable exception from the performances of the earlier plays. It produced no fight, no furious and fanatic assault. It was received with comparative indifference by both camps and allowed to pass without much comment.

Almost two years were to pass before another new play of Ibsen's was produced in London. On February 20, 1893, the *Masterbuilder* was performed at the Trafalgar Square Theatre. And once more the old strife was revived, with all its bitterness, with all its deplorable absurdity and vulgarity.

The following are some short extracts from the comments of the press :

'A play written, rehearsed, and acted by lunatics' (*Daily Telegraph*).

'The play is hopeless and indefensible' (*Globe*).

'A pointless, incoherent, and absolutely silly piece' (*Evening News*).

'Three acts of gibberish' (*Stage*).

'Sensuality . . . irreverence . . . unwholesome . . . simply blasphemous' (*Morning Post*).

'The blunder has been made. Masterbuilder Solness has been played . . . Hilde Wangel is perhaps the most detestable character in the drama's range . . . victim

¹ *Quintessence of Ibsenism* (1891).

² *Theatre*, June 1, 1891.

of nymphomania . . . deliberate murderess . . . mean, cheap, hateful, stands out in dishonourable distinctness' (*Pall Mall Gazette*).¹

According to the *Spectator* the play was nothing but 'one desperate, raging cry against human destiny.'² Together with the *Saturday Review* it maintained that it was open to all kinds of interpretations, and like its colleague it offered to prove that the drama contained a direct bearing on Gladstone's Home Rule Bill. Even a sympathetic critic like Sir Edward Russell had to admit that a 'crude mixture of the real and the symbolical' gave the play an air of unreality,³ thus differing in opinion from his collaborator Mr. P. C. Standing, who looked upon *The Masterbuilder* as the supreme expression of Ibsen's art.⁴ The *Saturday Review* regarded it as 'an impossible play,' but was generous enough to admit that the conclusion, 'for all the oddity and bad taste,' was 'by no means ill worked up to.'⁵ In *Hilde Wangel* it saw only a repetition of *Hedda Gabler*. Though it is true that both *Hedda* and *Hilde* are possessed of the same wish to act on others, of the same desire to exercise influence on human fates,

¹ Quoted from Mr. Archer's article 'The Mausoleum of Ibsen' (*Fortnightly Review*, July 1893). Mr. Archer gives the interesting information that, in spite of this criticism, the London public between June 7, 1889, and March 18, 1893, had paid £4,876 to see Ibsen's plays. This calculation did not include *The Lady from the Sea* at Terry's Theatre or any performance of *Ghosts*, which, not being licensed, had never taken any money. Neither did it include the performances at the Opéra Comique (May 29—June 10, 1893), or Sir Herbert Tree's performance of *An Enemy of the People* at the Haymarket (June 14, 1893).

² *Spectator*, March 4, 1893.

³ Sir Edward Russell in *Ibsen on his Merits* (1897), p. 23. Prof. Dowden seems also to have been of this opinion: 'The action has all the consequence and logic which a dream seems to have while we are still dreaming, and all the inconsequence and absurdity which we perceive in our dream when we awake' (*Contemporary Review*, 1906, vol. ii, p. 652).

⁴ Mr. P. C. Standing in *Ibsen on his Merits* (1897), p. 78.

⁵ *Saturday Review*, March 4, 1893.

there is a world between the blasée and passionless Hedda Gabler and the idealistic and enthusiastic Hilde Wangel: the one is a personification of ennui, the other an incarnation of youth.

In *The Masterbuilder* Mr. Monkhouse declared himself to be able only to recognize 'trains of thought and patches of human nature, but no credible human being.'¹ This, no doubt, contains a germ of truth. If *The Masterbuilder* was to be considered as a realistic picture, it would have to be set down as a failure. But the drama was not intended for a realistic work. It symbolizes the victory of youth and the failure of old ideals. 'The time will come,' Mr. Archer wrote, 'when many . . . will . . . find in it, not certainly a realistic play, but a noble and intensely dramatic poem.'² Whether one approves of the symbolistic drama as such or not, must be a question by itself. In judging the play as literature, one has to consider it under the aspect for which it was intended. Thus Mr. L. Simons in the *Westminster Review*³ gave an analysis of the play which showed a true conception of its essential qualities. 'None of the characters are human beings, pure and simple,' he wrote, ' . . . they are the images of the poet's inner life. . . . Once again, at the end of his career, that old beloved imagination and creative power of his comes to him, knocks at the door of his soul, and . . . makes him dream of lofty and fascinating castles in the air.'

When an author is not only sufficiently well known, but when also a certain notoriety adheres to his name, the moment has usually come when parodies are accorded to him. This distinction was also conferred upon Ibsen. In 1891 there had been a burlesque on *Hedda Gabler* produced at Toole's Theatre,⁴ and the following year a parody

¹ Allan Monkhouse, *Books and Plays* (1894).

² *Theatrical World* for 1893, p. 70.

³ *Westminster Review*, 1893, vol. ii, p. 506.

⁴ *New Hedda*, in one act (by Sir James Barrie), produced on May 30, 1891. Thea Elvsted is married to Tesman, but feels she must leave him as she cannot control her propensity for kissing other

on *Ghosts* at the Criterion.¹ In 1893 Mr. F. Anstey (Mr. J. A. Guthrie) issued his amusing volume *Mr. Punch's Pocket Ibsen*, which a man who had never read or seen a drama of Ibsen, but was familiar with the criticism it had provoked, might easily have thought to be the original plays of Ibsen himself. Indeed, there is a strange similarity between these parodies and many of those analyses of Ibsen's dramas which had appeared in the press. The latter delighted in ridiculing the tragical *dénouement* of the dramas by refusing to consider the psychological points which led up to it. And this was exactly how Mr. Anstey worked out his parodies. The catastrophes he ridiculed by letting the characters suddenly decide not to stand up to their resolutions: Rosmer and Rebecca return, Nora comes back, Hedvig does not shoot herself, and Hedda, on seeing that she cannot die beautifully, resolves to live on. There are some very amusing passages in these parodies which are well worth quoting: When Hedvig is going to shoot herself, Gregers Werle says to Hjalmar Ekdal: 'Hjalmar, show the great soul I always said you had. This sorrow will set free what is noble in you. Don't spoil a fine situation. Be a man! let the child shoot herself.' The best of the parodies is that on *The Masterbuilder*: Hilde has fallen in love with Dr. Herdal, whose unwillingness to swallow his own pills is made to correspond to Solness's giddiness and fear to mount his own buildings. She entreats him not to give way to his weakness: 'But you rolled them [the pills], you took them, and I want to see you stand once more free and high and great, swallowing your own preparations.' She succeeds in persuading him: 'At last! Now I see him in there, great and free again, mixing the powder in a spoon—with jam! . . . Now he raises the spoon. Higher—higher still!

men. She asks her grandfather as to the reasons for this passion, and he retorts, 'Ghosts, ghosts, it is all due to heredity.' In the end all the characters kill themselves with popguns. (See *Theatre*, July 1, 1891.)

¹ June 28, 1892.

[A gulp is audible from within.] There, didn't you hear a harp in the air?'

In connexion with the parodies on Ibsen must also be mentioned Mr. Shaw's play *The Philanderer* (1898), the action of which play centres round an Ibsen Club situated close to the Burlington Arcade. The play amusingly exposes all the absurdities of the Ibsen controversy in England.¹

The Wild Duck, though translated in 1890, was not put on the stage till four years later.² This play met with a rather unexpected reception. At its appearance Ibsen's supporters frankly stated their disappointment. Mr. Gosse thought it difficult³ and 'the least interesting' of Ibsen's dramas⁴; Mr. Havelock Ellis regarded it as 'the least remarkable'⁵; and Mr. Arthur Symons found it 'a play of inferior quality.'⁶

While Ibsen's admirers thus expressed their dissatisfaction, his opponents took a different view. Not that they saw any positive merits in the play. The drama, they complained, showed the growth of a morbid element, and Hedvig's death was 'a distinct advance . . . towards . . . criminal lunacy.'⁷ But they were delighted to think that Ibsen's intention in writing it was to sneer at his disciples, and supporting their attitude by this rather naïve supposition, they indulged in scoffing at his supporters, failing to see that in so doing they strongly testified to the personal character of their warfare. However, it is hardly conceivable that critics like Mr. Gosse and Mr. Ellis should have failed so completely to grasp the interior value of a play

¹ Cf. note 1, p. 139.

² At the Royalty Theatre, May 4, 1894.

³ 'The play is as simple as "Little Red Ridinghood" to any one who comes to it fresh from life instead of stale from the theatre' (G. B. Shaw, 'Ibsen Triumphant,' May 22, 1897 [*Dramatic Opinions*, etc., vol. ii, p. 269]).

⁴ *Fortnightly Review*, January 1889.

⁵ Havelock Ellis, *The New Spirit* (1890).

⁶ *Universal Review*, 1889, p. 567.

⁷ *Saturday Review*, April 19, 1890.

like *The Wild Duck*. Nowhere had Ibsen's horizon been wider, nowhere had he himself stood more aloof from the scene and the action. His pessimism had changed to a bitter irony—no less real and no less human; while a character-study like that of Gina Ekdal is equal to his best. 'In all dramatic literature, as far as I know it,' Mr. Shaw wrote,¹ 'there is no such part for a comedian as that of Hjalmar Ekdal.' Yet Mr. Gosse found the play 'obscure, cynical, and distressing to the last degree.'² 'The charge of obscurity,' Mr. Allan Monkhouse justly retorted,³ 'might as reasonably be brought against any work that does not carry in itself a creed or a personal explanation. . . . To me it seems that Ibsen is here on the right path.' To those who questioned whether Hedvig's death was Gregers' condemnation or his justification, Mr. Monkhouse replied: Such a question 'seems rather evidence of artistic balance than of obscurity.'

Mr. Monkhouse's opinion was also shared by Mr. Archer, who wrote: 'Hardly ever before, as it seemed to me, had I seen so much of the very quintessence of life concentrated in the brief traffic of the stage.' 'Mr. Shaw also held the same view: 'Where shall I find an epithet magnificent enough for *The Wild Duck*? To sit there getting deeper and deeper into that Ekdal house, and getting deeper and deeper into your own life all the time, until you forget that you are in a theatre at all, to look on with horror and pity at a profound tragedy, shaking with laughter all the time at an irresistible comedy.'⁴

This is exactly the impression which *The Wild Duck* creates, a true picture of the play which to Mr. Gosse

¹ 'Ibsen Triumphant,' May 22, 1897 (*Dramatic Opinions and Essays*, vol. ii, p. 271). Thus also Mr. Archer. (See *Theatrical World* of 1897, p. 146.)

² Introduction to Mrs. E. Marx-Aveling's translation of *The Lady from the Sea* (1890).

³ Allan Monkhouse, *Books and Plays* (1894).

⁴ *Theatrical World* for 1894, p. 139.

⁵ 'Ibsen Triumphant,' May 22, 1897 (*Dramatic Opinions*, etc., vol. ii, p. 269.)

appeared 'the least interesting' of Ibsen's dramas, and which was, in Mr. W. L. Courtney's opinion, a 'dreary record of provincial meanness and pessimism.'¹

With *Little Eyolf* the cry against Ibsen's morbidity and unwholesomeness was again brought into the foreground. This time, as before, the critics proved themselves able to read between the lines some entirely non-existing immoralities. The scene where Rita reproaches her husband for his neglect of her was exaggerated into an appallingly vulgar and repulsive exposition of female sensuality. Rita was described as a 'brainless animal,' her husband as a 'wordy prig,' while Ibsen's 'crudity' was explained by his 'want of manners.'² 'Surely,' Mr. A. S. Spender wrote, 'if there be a conventional reserve with regard to any subject that ought to be respected, it is the intimate relationship of married life.'³ Mr. Spender called his article 'A Plea for Reticence,' and deplored that Ibsen should 'pander to the modern craving for what is morbid and unwholesome.'

The old struggle between the ethical and aesthetic discussion of a work of art is a futile one. Mr. Spender took the moralist's point of view, but like most moralists was careful also to pretend to adopt the aesthetic aspect. Thus he believed himself justified in putting Ibsen aside as 'lacking in reticence which is essential to what is aesthetically good'—by which one is led to suppose that he really meant that 'aesthetically good' is only what is 'ethically right.' No doubt he believed himself exceptionally liberal when he maintained that 'within certain limits, the abnormal is as much the sphere of art as the normal.' What he would plead for was 'a less brutal and violent method,' that more might be left to the imagination. It might be questioned, even on moral grounds, how far such proceeding would be advisable. But as a matter of fact, in the case of *Little Eyolf* it must

¹ W. L. Courtney, *The Idea of Tragedy* (1900), p. 123.

² H. D. Traill, *National Review*, January 1897.

³ *Dublin Review*, 1897, ii, p. 112.

have been a trick of that very same imagination which made Mr. Spender discover 'those things which other people hardly dare to think.' For though the characters cannot be called normal, there are no indecencies in the play to give offence, and with the *Academy*¹ to say that there is nothing more shocking in Wycherley's comedies than there can be found in *Little Eyolf* is nothing less than a malicious and intentionally false statement. Sir Edward Russell was right when he wrote that '*Little Eyolf* upholds a true ideal of connubial union. . . . Everything that is unpleasant, deplorable, and puzzling in the play comes of defection from that ideal.'² Should anybody be so particular as to object to Ibsen's handling of his subject, he ought at least to admit that 'its morbidness is no argument against its greatness.'³

As for the construction of the play, most critics agreed to set it down as an indefensible defect that the action was completed in the first act.' 'The drama is an art-form that reveals character through action,' Mr. Ronald M'Neill declared; 'action is the essence of it.'⁴ That, however, is a postulate, and as such cannot be argued. But the truth remains that the absence of action in the drama does not the least reduce the interest in the psychological development of its characters. The play, in spite of its lack of exterior events, is highly dramatic.

Mr. G. W. Steevens pleaded that the subject was not an adequate motive for dramatic treatment.⁵ 'What has the drama, whose field is the clash of personality on personality, to do with such a psychological morphology?' he asked. But what is the theme of *Little Eyolf* if it be not exactly this clash of personality with personality?

Here, as in the case of *The Lady from the Sea*, the critics complained of the introduction of a symbolic element.⁶

¹ *Academy*, November 28, 1896.

² Sir Edward Russell and P. C. Standing, *Ibsen on his Merits* (1897), pp. 72-3.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

⁴ *National Review*, January 1897.

⁵ *New Review*, January 1895.

⁶ Mr. A. S. Spender in *Dublin Review*, 1897, vol. i, p. 112.

The Rat-wife, in the opinion of Mr. H. D. Traill, was 'monstrously and ridiculously out of place.'¹ But as Mr. Bernard Shaw has said, 'the divine messenger in Ibsen never is understood, especially by the critics.'²

While Mr. Traill declared³ that '*Little Eyolf*, if it were the work of an unknown hand,' would be ascribed 'to a possibly promising but unmistakably callow amateur who had still the rudiments of his art to learn,' the rest of its commentators showed more sense in their final verdict. Mr. Ronald McNeill, expressing his praise in the favourite terms of an average journalist, admitted that after all it offered 'something beyond an evening's amusement, something to think about and discuss.'⁴ And though Mr. Steevens thought that the story of Alfred and Rita would have been better told in a novel, he yet surrendered to its merit, proclaiming it a masterpiece, which 'it is better to have in a play than not to have at all.' 'If any stronger, truer, and profounder picture was ever made of the bereavement of weak natures and incompetent parents,' he wrote, '... the world seems somehow to have lost count of it.'⁵

Shortly after the publication of *John Gabriel Borkman* at Copenhagen (1896), there was issued an English translation of the play by Mr. William Archer. The drama was described by the *Saturday Review* as 'every whit as powerful a piece of composition as any one of its predecessors,' and the evolution of the characters and their correlation were praised for their remarkable simpleness and inevitability.⁶ Both Mr. Archer and Sir Edward Russell, however, found fault with the cynical farewell speech of Mrs. Wilton, when she says that she will take the girl with her,

¹ *National Review*, January 1897. 'The Rat-wife is neither reality nor imagination . . . but the offspring of a supernaturalism that does not believe in itself' (Arthur Symons, *Quarterly Review*, 1906, vol. ii, p. 391).

² *Saturday Review*, November 28, 1896.

³ *National Review*, January 1897.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *New Review*, January 1895.

⁶ *Saturday Review*, December 19, 1896.

that Erhart may have someone to fall back upon in case he should get bored with her.¹

When the play was produced at the Strand Theatre some time later, it turned out a distinct failure. This, however, seems to have been chiefly due to the poorness of the mounting. Writing of the performance, Mr. Shaw remarked: 'It is highly honourable to the pioneers of the drama that they are poor; but in art, what poverty can only do unhandsomely and stingily, it should not do at all.'²

In March 1898 Ibsen celebrated his seventieth birthday. Though none of his plays was acted for the occasion in London, his English admirers did their best to pay him their compliments. Mr. Gosse wrote an article in the *Sketch*,³ Mr. Archer published a long poem in the *Chronicle*,⁴ while others expressed their warm approbation elsewhere. *Politiken*, the Danish newspaper, in honour of the occasion, invited contributions from authors of European fame. Among the English who responded to the invitation were Mr. Shaw, Sir Arthur Pinero, W. T. Stead (who considered the assertion of women's claim for free development of their character to be Ibsen's greatest merit), Mr. I. Zangwill, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Jerome K. Jerome, Justin McCarthy, and F. Max Müller (who wrote to express his regret that he had never had time to read any of Ibsen's plays).⁵ In England money was subscribed and a silver gift sent to Ibsen, accompanied by an address. The affair was largely ridiculed in the press.⁶ 'Mr. Beerbohm Tree,' Mr. Bernard Shaw wrote,⁷ 'who ventured to contribute three guineas towards the purchase of a drinking-cup for Ibsen (all Nor-

¹ W. Archer, *Theatrical World* of 1897, p. 122. Sir Edward Russell in *Ibsen on his Merits* (1897), pp. 176, 179.

² *Saturday Review*, May 8, 1897.

³ *Sketch*, March 23, 1898.

⁴ *Daily Chronicle*, March 21, 1898.

⁵ *Politiken*, March 18, 19, 20, 1898.

⁶ *Daily Chronicle*, March 21, 22, 1898.

⁷ 'England's Delicate Compliment to Ibsen' (*Saturday Review*, March 26, 1898).

wegians are assumed to be mighty drinkers), must feel rather like a man in morning dress at a smart dinner-party, for no other manager compromised himself by meddling in the business.' However, a sum of £53 11s. was collected, and Ibsen in return expressed his warmest gratitude for the distinction thus bestowed upon him. (By the way, how unfair of Mr. Max Beerbohm to declare that Ibsen had no capacity for gratitude! ¹). Of all courtesies, however, the compliment paid by Mr. Shaw was the most remarkable. Mr. Archer, in his poem, had hinted a comparison between Ibsen and Shakespeare, to which Mr. Shaw strongly objected. 'Is it kind to Shakespeare? Is it polite to Ibsen?' he asked. '... The comparison does not honour Ibsen: it makes Shakespeare ridiculous. If Ibsen had got no further than "the path that Shakespeare trod," he would never have been heard of outside Norway.' ²

Towards the close of the century the controversy around Ibsen's name in England began to fade away, and the one-sidedly enthusiastic panegyrics as well as the fanatic and stupid attacks were brought to an end. People and critics were able to estimate the dramatist's work soberly, and though Ibsen on the whole was acknowledged as the undisputed monarch of the drama of his century, his greatness was by no means judged to be of the highest order. 'Ibsen fails of supreme greatness,' Mr. Max Beerbohm wrote, 'because he cannot keep his temper. . . . He is a Titan, not a god.' ³

No sooner had the greatness of Ibsen's social dramas been generally admitted in England than critics started

¹ Max Beerbohm, *Saturday Review*, May 26, 1906.

² *Saturday Review*, March 26, 1898. In another place Mr. Shaw refers to Ibsen as 'a much greater dramatist than Shakespeare' ('Ibsen Triumphant,' May 22, 1897: *Dramatic Opinions and Essays*, vol. ii, p. 270). In *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* he says: 'The fact remains that Shakespeare survives by what he has in common with Ibsen, and not by what he has in common with Webster and the rest' (ed. 1913, p. 198).

³ *Saturday Review*, July 22, 1899.

to bewail 'the manner of his decadence,'¹ the same which Mr. Shaw later described as 'the splendour of his sunset glory.'² Few of the critics would agree with Mr. J. A. Joyce in regarding *When we Dead Awaken* as possibly the greatest of Ibsen's works.³ This drama, which appeared at the dawn of the new century, was by the *Academy* described as 'a welter of dark utterances, vague symbolisms, and mysterious figures of speech,' as a 'sinister, abhorrent, and sterile narrative.'⁴ Likewise Mr. Max Beerbohm found its meaning not profound and the symbolism a trifle crude,⁵ though three years later, at Ibsen's death, he referred to it as, though 'feeble . . . in execution, . . . deadlier in intention' than any other of his plays.⁶ 'In *When we Dead Awaken*,' Mr. Arthur Symonds wrote, 'all the people are quite consciously insane, and act a kind of charade with perfectly solemn faces.'⁷ The poetic beauty of the drama, the delicate strain of melancholy which lends to it a peculiar atmosphere, different from that of any of its predecessors, its soft touches of human sympathy,—these were, except in Mr. Joyce's article in the *Fortnightly Review*, scarcely noticed at the time.

The period which has elapsed since the publication of Ibsen's last play has not done much to alter the author's position in England. The year following his death witnessed the publication of a number of critical and biographical books. But though his plays are still acted in England from time to time, and even occasionally with more than a mere *succès d'estime*,⁸ the common opinion seems to be that, though Ibsen did well in his time, he is getting old-fashioned, and his ideas no longer strike us

¹ *Academy*, April 14, 1900.

² *Quintessence of Ibsenism*, ed. 1913, p. 119.

³ *Fortnightly Review*, 1900, vol. i, p. 575.

⁴ *Academy*, April 14, 1900.

⁵ *Saturday Review*, February 7, 1903.

⁶ *Ibid.*, May 26, 1906.

⁷ *Quarterly Review*, 1906, vol. ii, p. 391.

⁸ A very successful performance was that of *Ghosts* at the Kingsway Theatre early in 1917.

as being of vital importance. Professor Dowden, contributing an article on Ibsen to the *Contemporary Review* in 1906, chose to pass over all the dramas subsequent to *The Masterbuilder*. 'The fate of *The Masterbuilder*,' he wrote, 'suggests the prudence of leaving a few rungs of the ladder unscaled. Happily, a literary critic is not obliged to take as his word of order "All or Nothing."'¹ At the end of the nineteenth century, however, Ibsen's name was still something of a force in England. His 'earlier dramas,' the *Academy* declared in 1899,² 'must be considered marvellous, but those of his middle and later periods are more; they are miraculous.' It is very doubtful whether any weekly paper in England would have said that to-day.

It had been Ibsen's social plays which had attracted most attention in England. Though dramas like *The Pretenders* and *Emperor and Galilean* did not escape notice, they never came sufficiently into the foreground to become subjects of public discussion. The same was also the case with *Lady Inger* and *The Warriors of Helgeland*. The local atmosphere of the political plot in *The Young Men's League* naturally prevented that play from becoming an object of any great interest in England. Nor did *Love's Comedy* and *An Enemy of the People*, though both plays are dealing with social questions, manage to contend with the rest of the author's social plays. Of *An Enemy of the People* a singularly successful performance was indeed given with Sir Herbert Tree in the part of Stockman,³ but the play itself, not being of a strikingly provoking character, did not produce any prolonged discussion. Several of the plays just mentioned were acted on English stages, and all of them were written about in the press or elsewhere.⁴ But though these critical comments

¹ Prof. Dowden, 'Henrik Ibsen,' *Contemporary Review*, 1906, vol. ii, pp. 652 ff.

² *Academy*, July 22, 1899.

³ June 14, 1893, repeated in 1905.

⁴ Cf. Appendix D.

are often not negligible in themselves, they are hardly important enough to call for any special consideration in this chapter. It still remains, however, to say some words about the reception of the author's two great poetical dramas.

Of the critics who furiously attacked his prose dramas, only a few knew that Ibsen also could claim to rank as a poet.¹ As early as 1872 Mr. Gosse had given a review of *Peer Gynt*,² but abstained from going into the subject beyond the mere outlines of the action. A detailed analysis of the central ideas of the play was first given by the Rev. P. H. Wicksteed in an admirable article contributed to the *Contemporary Review*.³ The author, a Unitarian minister, was so fascinated by the merits of the work that he ventured to read it in the original with a class at Hampstead, and is even reported to have selected passages from it for the text of his sermons.⁴ Though several English critics have dealt with the work later, none has succeeded in giving a truer or more penetrating analysis of Peer's moral debasement than Mr. Wicksteed.

On the whole, however, the criticism which followed upon the translation of the poem by Messrs. W. and Charles Archer (1892) was as little unanimous as that which was caused by most of the prose dramas. As a romantic work, Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch gave it his highest praise⁵; while the *Saturday Review*⁶ could see nothing in it but an imitation of Goethe's *Faust*. Sir Edward Russell regarded it as a

¹ Mr. Gosse's review of Ibsen's poems (*Spectator*, March 16, 1872) had in 1891 been supplemented by the Rev. P. H. Wicksteed, who rendered a great number of the verses into English prose (*Contemporary Review*, 1891, vol. ii, pp. 333).

² *Spectator*, July 20, 1872.

³ *Contemporary Review*, August 1889 (reprinted in *Four Lectures on Ibsen* [1892]). The lecture on *Peer Gynt* was read before 'The Argosy' in London, January 1889.

⁴ Halvorsen's *Forfatterlexicon*.

⁵ Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch, *Adventures in Criticism* (1896) [the article on *Peer Gynt* written 1892].

⁶ *Saturday Review*, October 8, 1892.

'production . . . in no sense . . . to be dealt with seriously as a concatenation or as a whole.' 'There is no real problem,' he declared, 'no real answer, no real theorem, no real thesis, no refined excellence.'¹ Mr. Bernard Shaw, on the other hand, after having attended a performance of the play in Paris, challenged 'any man in England with a reputation to lose, to deny that *Peer Gynt* is one of . . . the world's very choicest treasures in its kind.'²

What most puzzled the critics was the *dénouement* of the drama. After a life in selfishness and self-sufficiency Peer comes home, an old man, and finds Solveig, the love of his youth, now an old and blind woman, still waiting for him—and is received by her, whom he has selfishly and cruelly deserted, and whose life he has wasted—with the same tenderness and love which she has always borne him. This is the Solveig whom Mr. Gosse makes out to be a gipsy-woman.³ In another place he lets Peer die in the last act.⁴ The picture of the aged Peer Gynt dying in the lap of his faithful gipsy-woman is, in truth, pathetic, and should be considered highly creditable to the critic who devised it. But by killing Peer, Mr. Gosse sets himself to solve a problem which Ibsen himself has chosen to leave unravelled. The death of Peer at that particular moment would naturally mean the death of a repentant sinner, redeemed by the love of a woman. But when the curtain falls, Peer is *not* dying; we are left uncertain as to the possibility of his redemption, being told that

¹ Sir Edward Russell and P. C. Standing, *Ibsen on his Merits* (1897), p. 38.

² *Saturday Review*, November 21, 1896. The challenge, it seems, was taken up ten years later by Mr. Arthur Symonds when he declared *Peer Gynt* to be an unsuccessful experiment, 'fierce, local, and fantastic,' a 'thing done on a holiday, for a holiday' (*Quarterly Review*, 1906, ii, p. 386).

³ *Spectator*, July 20, 1872.

⁴ *Fortnightly Review*, January 1873. Thus also Mr. Bernard Shaw in *Quintessence of Ibsenism* (ed. 1913, p. 52), while a contributor to the *Westminster Review* (1899, i, p. 625) adds to the pathos of the picture by the united deaths of Peer and Solveig. Solveig 'wins his soul at last and carries it with her to Elysium.'

he has to face the Button-Moulder once more, and not till then will his fate be decided. It is certainly 'a shirking of the ethical problem, not a solution,' as Messrs. Archer pointed out.¹ It is not necessarily 'sheer spiritualism' or 'flat Christianity,' as the *Saturday Review* would have it.² That would apply better to the solution invented by Mr. Gosse. Mr. Bernard Shaw has rightly said that the ending can 'easily be taken as implying the pretty middle-class doctrine that all moral difficulties find their solution in love as the highest of all things.'³ But that is only by the reading into it of a moral which has no sufficient foundation in the play itself. To regard the solution, with Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, as merely a subsidiary problem 'is a little difficult, the moral development of Peer's character having been the sole theme throughout the whole of the play.

Mr. Archer considered it important that the poet had given Solveig the last word. And so undoubtedly it is. But as Mr. Wicksteed pointed out: the fact that Peer has previously been told by the Button-Moulder that he is, in truth, no one, that he has realized the negativeness of his life, does already indicate a step on a better way.⁴

On the other hand, there are plenty of reasons for not believing in Peer's conversion and final redemption. It may appear a psychological improbability—ininitely more so than the sudden transformation of Nora or Bernick or the married couple in *Little Eyolf*. A conversion can only be brought about by a stricken conscience. But though Peer seems to realize the emptiness of his existence, there is nothing that tells of a sincere repentance. A life like his, led in egotism and incessant disregard for other people's feelings, can only harden the soul. And when Peer meets Solveig again, she takes the foremost place

¹ W. and C. Archer, Introduction to *Peer Gynt* (1892).

² *Saturday Review*, October 8, 1892.

³ *Ibid.*, 1896, November 22.

⁴ *Adventures in Criticism* (1896; the article written in 1892).

⁵ Wicksteed, *Four Lectures*, etc. (1892).

in his thoughts, not for her own sake, not as the woman who has devoted her life and sacrificed her happiness to the man she loved, but as a means to save him from his fear of going into the melting-spoon of the Button-Moulder. It is egotism, which only bears the stamp of humbleness because of the vicissitude of circumstances.

If it had been Ibsen's intention to effect Peer's redemption through Solveig, why did he not let him die in the last act?—a solution, moreover, which would have had the advantage of giving a satisfactory ending to the drama. As it is, it cannot be denied that the *dénouement* is perplexing, and must appear especially so to all who wish to draw a moral from the play. But it may be well to remember that in several cases it was a favourite principle with Ibsen to wind up his dramas with an interrogation: we do not know whether Mrs. Alving hands the poison to her son or not; we are not sure whether Nora will come back or not; and when the German critics made claims for another ending to *A Doll's House*, Ibsen, in order to protect the play against arbitrary improvements, consented to make an alteration—which it is significant to note that he did, not by letting Nora remain with her husband, but by making her fall unconscious to the floor, unable to make up her mind as to the choice between the duty to her children and the cultivation of her own individuality.

In *Brand*¹ there could be no such doubt as to the fate of the hero. Brand perishes in the snow, and the avalanche which buries his body also sweeps away all uncertainty as to the meaning of his death. It is evident that a life

¹ *Brand* was first translated into English prose by Mr. W. Wilson in 1891. Three years later there appeared two metrical translations, one by Mr. F. E. Garrett and another by Prof. C. H. Herford. The latter was a very able work, of which parts had already been published in the *Contemporary Review* in 1891 (vol. i, p. 407).

Ibsen derived Brand's idea of the Deity from the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard. An interesting comparison between the poem and the religious and aesthetical doctrines of the philosopher was given by Mr. M. A. Stobart in an article in the *Fortnightly Review*, 1899, vol. ii, p. 227.

led on Brand's principles must prove disastrous, that the strict claim for 'all or nothing' can but turn out a fatal one, and however idealistic it may appear to some, it is obviously not a principle on which a human life can be lived. 'It is impossible,' Mr. Wicksteed wrote, 'not to perceive that he [Ibsen] is conscious throughout that Brand is treading a path that leads to no goal.'¹ So far everything is clear. But again the last words of the play puzzled the critics. To Brand's dying cry a voice responds that God is 'Deus Caritatis.' But to Brand in life God had been no deity of mercy. In his opinion, religious truth could not be reached by any compromise between 'all or nothing.' And according to this view he had lived his whole life, sacrificing all that was dear to him : the salvation of his mother's soul and the lives of his son and wife. Did the voice, then, at the end, proclaiming God as 'Deus Caritatis,' mean that Brand through his sacrifices had merited redemption, and that God now at last for him was the God of Love ?² Or did it proclaim that the struggle and sacrifices had been all in vain, a cruel sentence on a life lived on a false principle, on an uncompromising soul ? Though the ambiguity of the last words may permit of both these interpretations and allow the critics to read into it the meaning they most cherish, it seems somewhat unpleasing to interpret, with Mr. Stobart, the last words as the final reward of an heroic character. Brand's mother dies without his blessing, but firmly convinced that God is less cruel than her son, while Brand, in the words of Mr. Shaw, 'aspiring from height of devotion to his ideal, plunges from depth to depth of murderous cruelty.' Does it not seem more natural with Mr. Wicksteed to interpret the proclamation of God as 'Deus Caritatis' as indicating 'a church, that they may yet build, who, heroic as he [Brand], suffer their heroism to be warmed and guided by love' ?³

¹ *Four Lectures* (1892), p. 43.

² M. A. Stobart, *Fortnightly Review*, 1899, vol. ii, p. 227.

³ *Four Lectures*, etc. (1892), pp. 51-2.

The tragedy of *Brand* is wholly the tragedy of a man's failure to combine faith with humanity. It is the strength of his will, his uncompromising soul, that makes him tragic and heroic, not the character of his ideal. Several critics saw in *Brand* an attack on Christianity. But there is nothing in the poem to show the author's religious sympathies. Nor is *Brand*'s own conception of the deity of more than subsidiary interest. In a letter to Georg Brandes,¹ Ibsen has declared that he might just as well have made the same syllogism with regard to a sculptor or a politician.

On the whole, the English critics agreed to regard the drama as superior to *Peer Gynt*. One reason for this was the character of the subject. 'The motto of *Peer Gynt* is base, while that of *Brand* is exalted,' Rev. Richard A. Armstrong wrote.² The same writer also held that Ibsen's fame in future centuries would undoubtedly rest on his two dramatic poems': 'Would that instead of many Hedda Gablers crammed with morbid pathology, the mighty Scandinavian would add to *Peer Gynt* . . . and to *Brand* . . . a drama of great life lived on true lines and issuing in triumph of the good!' Also the *Saturday Review* agreed to regard *Brand* as 'of a far higher order of literature than any of the prose plays except *The Wild Duck*'³; while Sir Edward Russell declared *Brand* to be 'undoubtedly one of the greatest works of ethical imagination that the world has ever seen.'⁴

¹ June 26, 1869.

² *Westminster Review*, 1891, vol. i, p. 409.

³ Ibid. Thus also Mr. A. S. Spender: 'In Norway, even now [1897], his claim to immortality rests almost entirely on these' (*Dublin Review*, 1897, vol. i, p. 112).

⁴ *Saturday Review*, December 19, 1891.

⁵ Sir Edward Russell and P. C. Standing, *Ibsen on his Merits* (1897), p. 46. Not all the critics, however, shared these favourable opinions. Thus Mr. Arthur Symons in the *Quarterly Review*, 1906, vol. ii, p. 385, regarded *Brand* as a tract rather than a poem: 'types, not people, move in it. Their speech is doctrine, not utterance.'

§ 2. GENERAL CRITICISM AND APPRECIATION

Ibsen's plays in England had the unfortunate effect of utterly destroying the favourable impression of Norwegian life and character which novels and books of travel had earlier conveyed.¹ It was as if the country had to buy the acknowledgement of one of its poets with the loss of that esteem for its population which it had previously enjoyed. Thus one of the reviews wrote: 'If his [Ibsen's] life-work and his story give proof that the cities of Scandinavia are the theatres of considerable intellectual activity . . . they tend also to destroy belief in the idyllic, uncorrupted virtue of town and country folk in the Wild Northland.'² The critics, who had taken delight in the study of the sagas, found very little of the Norse spirit in Ibsen's plays; while Mr. Oswald Crawford, to whom the ancient literature was 'the most pointless, perplexed, and profitless of reading,' complained of Ibsen as 'far too lineal a descendant and too close a follower of the writers of the ancient sagas.'³ Most critics seemed to agree that the Norwegian character was nowhere 'more faithfully reflected than in the dramas of Ibsen';⁴ in fact so much so that Ibsen was accused over and over again of being a provincial and local writer⁵: 'If Ibsen were an Englishman,' Sir F. Wedmore wrote, 'I should say that he was provincial, I should say that he was suburban.'⁶ Henry James, believing Ibsen's purpose to be 'to tell us about his own people,' regarded 'this parochial or suburban stamp' as acting 'as a sort of substitute . . . for charm.'⁷ Mr. Shaw readily admitted the existence of a suburban

¹ 'Norwegians, as he depicts them, . . . are very far from being so pastoral and so interesting [?] as they appear in the note-books of English tourists' (*Saturday Review*, January 13, 1883).

² *London Quarterly Review*, July 1892.

³ *Fortnightly Review*, 1891, vol. i, p. 725.

⁴ Zanoni, *Ibsen and the Drama* (1884), p. 192.

⁵ Mr. W. L. Courtney in *Quarterly Review*, 1891, vol. i, p. 305. G. W. Steevens in *New Review*, January 1895.

⁶ *Academy*, June 15, 1889.

⁷ *New Review*, June 1891.

mark in Ibsen, but boldly declared that 'suburbanity at present means modern civilization.' 'His suburban drama,' he wrote, 'is the inevitable outcome of a suburban civilization (meaning a civilization that appreciates fresh air).'¹ Sir Arthur Pinero, it would seem, was less apt to approve of that same suburban civilization. Having seen Ibsen at the Grand Café in Christiania, he felt 'grateful that the tragic idea had developed in a larger atmosphere than the smoking-room of a Norwegian hotel.'² 'There may be tragedies in South Hampstead,' Mr. W. L. Courtney wisely reflected,³ 'although experience does not consistently testify to the fact, but at all events from the historic and traditional standpoint, tragedy is more likely to concern itself with Glamys Castle, Melrose Abbey, Carisbrooke, or even with Carlton House Terrace.' Yet it is to be supposed that most people will find it difficult to understand why the idea of tragedy, which is concerned with the crisis of human souls, should be so altogether dependent on accidental environments, and why its transference from Carlton House Terrace to a scene of inferior distinction should necessarily bring about any reduction in its essential qualities.

'Far from being the small-beer chronicler of a Norwegian parish,' Mr. Archer wrote, 'Ibsen is of all modern artists the one who goes deepest into the essence of life and is least hampered by its accidents.'⁴ 'The fact is, we all have to look much nearer home for the originals of Ibsen's characters than we imagine,' Mr. Bernard Shaw wrote.⁵ 'His pictures of social and political life in outlandish

¹ *Saturday Review*, November 28, 1896.

² It would seem that Ibsen was less censorious in his opinion of Sir Arthur, for we are told by Mr. E. J. Goodman that 'he expressed great admiration' for the author of *The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith* ('Dr. Ibsen at Christiania,' *Theatre*, September 1, 1895).

³ *Idea of Tragedy* (1900), p. 122.

⁴ W. Archer, *Theatrical World* for 1895, p. 198.

⁵ May 22, 1897; *Dramatic Opinions and Essays*, vol. ii, p. 272. The same opinion was expressed in a short letter to *Politiken*, March 20, 1898.

little Norwegian parishes' are 'instantly recognizable in London and Chicago.'¹

However, most critics persisted in regarding Ibsen's characters as exclusively Norwegian—'of no interest to the London of to-day or the Paris of to-day.'² Thus a number of writers delighted in identifying his *dramatis personae* with the typical Norseman. According to them, Brendel, Lövborg, and old Ekdal revealed the Norwegian as a hopeless drunkard, Bernick and Borkman showed him as a being destitute of moral responsibility, while the marriages of Helmer, Ekdal, Borkman, Alving, and Almers proved him to be incapable of matrimonial felicity. We have already seen how Ibsen was regarded as an immoral, unhealthy, and morbid writer, and to what extent and what excesses this opinion had been carried by the press in the commentaries on the separate plays. In giving judgment on Ibsen's authorship as a whole, it formed the most prominent part of the accusations. Thus Mr. H. A. Kennedy in the *Nineteenth Century* wrote: "Not only does his Excalibur smite soundingly on much plate and mail, but it is thrust probingly into every clotted and mantled pool by the wayside. Without special nicety for his own nostril, he gives to the air the pestilent reek that has accumulated beneath the stagnant surface.'³ The *London Quarterly Review* (July 1892) accounted for Ibsen's 'immorality' by asserting that he had 'no contact with a thoroughly vitalized Christianity': 'The author has never known living Christianity,' it wrote, 'or understood the character of Christ and His teaching. For want of such knowledge he has lavished his really great powers on works that can scarcely live beyond our day.' It would be impossible to put up any positive defence against such a charge. The best attempt was perhaps that made by Mr. Bernard Shaw when he wrote that 'Ibsen's attack on morality is a symptom of the revival of religion, not

¹ *Dramatic Opinions and Essays*, vol. i, p. 56.

² Sir Frederick Wedmore in the *Academy*, July 27, 1889.

³ *Nineteenth Century*, August 1891.

of its extinction.’¹ The charge against Ibsen of being guilty of an immoral tendency was, as the same writer pointed out, quite true, in the sense in which it was used.² ‘I doubt not,’ Mr. Wicksteed wrote,³ ‘that Ibsen has done, is doing, and will do, moral harm to some of his readers,’ thus differing in the opinion from the Censor, Mr. E. F. S. Piggott, who, confessing that ‘all Ibsen’s characters were morally deranged,’ yet regarded them (with the exception of those in *Ghosts*) as ‘too absurd altogether to be injurious to public morals.’⁴

But while discussing Ibsen’s alleged immorality, there is this question to be answered: Wherein does it mainly consist? Some have accused him of making vice seem attractive. But surely there is nothing recommendable in Chamberlain Alving’s example? In other cases it will be found that vice seems attractive only because of its juxtaposition to other and greater crimes. If one is inclined to forgive Nora the falsifying of the document, it is not because Ibsen actually recommends forgery, but because it seems such a small affair compared with the moral crime of Helmer. When Rosmer says of Brendel that *he* at least has had the courage to live his life, it is not because he approves of drunkenness as such, but because he thinks it a small sin compared with the respectable hypocrisy of Rector Kroll. If, finally, any reader should happen to sympathize with Hedda, it would not be because Ibsen has made her seem attractive, for that he certainly has not, but because the reader himself takes a greater interest in spiritual morbidity than in respectable dullness.

Others have accused Ibsen of morbidity. To this charge it will seem that Sir Edward Russell gave a sound reply, when he admitted that Ibsen’s subjects were sometimes morbid, but maintained that “the morbid element

¹ *Quintessence of Ibsenism*, ed. 1913, p. 166.

² *Ibid.*, p. 165.

³ *Four Lectures* (1892), p. 96.

⁴ See W. Archer, *Theatrical World* for 1895, p. 70.

in life is far-reaching, is productive in life of the most dramatic events.'¹ 'With Ibsen one cannot separate the morbid from the beautiful,' was the verdict given by a writer in *Belgravia*.² However, it cannot be denied that even the charge of morbidity against Ibsen has been unduly exaggerated. It is true that Hedda Gabler and Rita Almers are morbid. But these are exceptions. 'The physical characteristic of Nora, Mrs. Alving, Rebecca West, and Hilde Wangel,' Mr. Archer pointed out,³ 'is in fact robust and even radiant health.' 'As for Hilde, the trouble with her is surely that she is so radiantly, unscrupulously, immorally sane.'⁴

As for the charge of obscenity in Ibsen, it is impossible anywhere to detect a single germ which can give it the slightest foundation. If the subjects may sometimes appear improper to the Philistines, it is impossible to understand how even a Mrs. Grundy can object to the manner of their handling. 'I do not class as obscene,' Sir Edward Russell wrote,⁵ 'the deliberate and brave tackling with high moralistic purpose of subjects which, though generally tabooed by delicacy, may occasionally be dealt with courageously by a great master of human life.'

However, there were critics who, like Robert Buchanan, could find no 'literary salvation' in Ibsen's social plays, but only 'the last dregs of a devil's gospel.' Quoting Sainte-Beuve's opinion that in two-thirds of men there exists a poet who died young and whom the man survives, Buchanan remarked: 'The survival of Ibsen suggests highly disagreeable "mortuary" reflections.'⁶ It seems to me that Mr. Wicksteed gave expression to a happier and sounder view of the chief impression left upon the

¹ Sir Edward Russell and P. C. Standing, *Ibsen on his Merits* (1897), p. 25.

² 'Ibsen and the Morbid Taint,' *Belgravia*, January 1894.

³ *Theatrical World* for 1893, p. 157.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Sir Edward Russell and P. C. Standing, *Ibsen on his Merits* (1897), p. 55.

⁶ *Daily Telegraph*, July 22, 1889.

readers of Ibsen's social dramas, when he wrote: 'Who has made us feel the responsibility sitting closer to us for frivolity in rejecting, or hypocrisy in accepting, the current code and creeds of society?'¹ 'The social dramas of Ibsen,' Zanoni declared,² "... act as a wholesome and bracing tonic to the mind'; and even Mr. H. A. Kennedy³ had to admit that 'Ibsen's mental attitude ... is in the main a vigorous and a healthy one.'

In 1895 Max Nordau's *Degeneration* was translated into English.⁴ As this work attracted a certain notice and in the same year was replied to by an English writer, it may be worth while to bestow a moment's consideration on the chapter dealing with Ibsen.

Herr Nordau's great aim was to prove Ibsen to be a degenerate and 'a theoretical criminal.' This aim he sought to accomplish by the blunt and arrogant identification of the author with the most morbid of his characters. Herr Nordau's method is well illustrated by the nature of his argument.⁵ When he writes that 'in imbeciles the tendency to allegory and symbolism is very common,'⁶ it is in the secret hope that the reader, knowing Ibsen to show such a tendency, shall conclude that he must consequently be an imbecile—the author well knowing that a careless reader, not able to distinguish clearly between true and false syllogisms, will easily accept such impudent and unblushing imposture.

Ibsen's 'degeneracy,' Herr Nordau found displayed in his 'anti-social impulses,' which, according to him, are 'the degenerate's incapacity for self-adaptation.'⁷

¹ *Four Lectures* (1892), p. 98.

² Zanoni, *Ibsen and the Drama* (1894), p. 31.

³ In the *Nineteenth Century*, August 1891.

⁴ People who believe in the fruitfulness of applying scientific or sociological views to art should contrast Max Nordau's chapter on Ibsen with the highly interesting and ingenious analysis of *Peer Gynt* by Otto Weiniger in *Ueber die Letzten Dinge*.

⁵ '... his pages on Ibsen, the folly of which goes beyond all patience' (G. B. Shaw, *The Sanity of Art*, 1895).

⁶ *Degeneration*, p. 396.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 398.

'Ibsen's poverty of ideas indicates another stigma of degeneracy,' he declares a little farther on.¹

However, the author had a little difficulty in reconciling Ibsen's different characters, which difficulty led him to the conclusion that Ibsen does not know his own mind. (Again a symptom of degeneracy!) 'Is a man to strive for truth, or to swelter in deceit?' he asks. 'Is Ibsen with Stockmann or with Relling?'² When Ulrik Brendel says that he likes to have his pleasures in solitude, for then he can enjoy them doubly, Herr Nordau at once proclaims Ibsen a hopeless pessimist.³ He quotes Oswald's sympathies with the young artist—who, unable to afford the expenses of marriage, keeps his girl as a mistress—as an example of Ibsen's 'absurdity.' For as Max Nordau laboriously tries to prove, a marriage can be established without any great expenses!⁴ Further, the German author confessed himself unable to find any key to Ibsen's moral views: 'Mrs. Elvsted, who runs away from her husband to pursue her lover, has Ibsen's sympathies,' he writes⁵; 'but if a man seduces a maiden and liberally provides for her subsequent maintenance (Werle and Gina) . . . it is so heinous a crime that the culprit remains branded his whole life.' One might ask how Herr Nordau knows that Mrs. Elvsted's running away from her husband has Ibsen's sympathy? Her husband is not introduced into the play, and the question whether her elopement is justifiable or not is not raised at all. In the case of Werle and Gina, it is not the illicit relations between them that is Werle's greatest crime. It is his taking refuge behind a screen of apparent respectability, and providing for Gina's maintenance by the arrangement of her marriage to a man who is unaware of the relations which have existed between his wife and his benefactor.

On the whole, Ibsen's plays, according to Max Nordau, depict the atmosphere of an immoral society, which the

¹ *Degeneration*, p. 399.

² *Ibid.*, p. 375.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 399.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 385.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 369.

German author tactfully describes as 'a hideous hole on the Norwegian coast, composed of drunkards and silly louts, of idiots and crazed hysterical geese, who in their whole life have never formed a clearer thought than: How can I get hold of a bottle of brandy?'¹

Mr. A. E. Hake, who replied to Max Nordau's work,² justly pointed out that Ibsen must be looked upon as Max Nordau's co-operator rather than his opponent, because his 'characters are types of that very degeneration which Max Nordau desires to combat.'³ But there is a difference between the Norwegian and the German temperament: Max Nordau, Mr. Hake writes, 'is, in his capacity of the most German of Germans, naturally wroth with Ibsen for representing as a social evil what a normal, sound-minded, common-sense German—the very type of the non-degenerate—would consider as a useful and comfortable arrangement.'⁴ And the author further endeavours to prove that the manners and principles which Ibsen attacks in his social dramas are a direct import from Germany, which Germans brought with them when they settled in Norwegian towns, that it is not accidental that 'the stagnant pools of corruption' in Norway are to be found in those cities 'where the old German Philistine features have been most distinctly preserved.'⁵ Pursuing this argument, the author applies it to *A Doll's House*, where he finds the two inimical cultures most clearly personified, 'the old Norwegian culture being represented by the uncompromising, impulsive, and intense Nora, and the imported German culture by the pedantic, commonplace, and animal Helmer.'⁶ Though this interpretation may seem somewhat fanciful, and it is certainly carried much too far, it yet, perhaps, contains a germ of a not wholly insignificant truth.

If there is small foundation for regarding Ibsen as a degenerate or an immoral writer, there is likewise little

¹ *Degeneration*, p. 405.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 183–4.

² *Regeneration* (1895).

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

reason for denouncing him as a pessimist or a negative satirist. Both these charges were, however, frequently brought against him by the English critics. Thus Mr. Courtney declared that 'mankind must appear very despicable to a man who makes Peer Gynt the hero of a drama and paints the conventional husband under the form of a self-satisfied idiot like Helmer.'¹ But to find fault with a present condition of society is not necessarily identical with a pessimistic view of life. 'Negative' is an epithet which will always be hurled against every reformer of society. But in the case of Ibsen's social plays it is evidently and absolutely out of place. 'A man who pours out the vials of scorn upon vice and recommends virtue with such winning sweetness as does the author of *Peer Gynt* and *Brand* is anything rather than negative,' Mr. Gosse wrote.² And Ibsen 'is nothing as a literary personality if not positive,' Henry James declared.³

It is true that against the author's later dramas the charge of negativism can be made with better reason. But then all tragedies, including masterpieces like *Hamlet* and *Lear*, are in this respect negative. Negativism and pessimism form parts of the tragic principle, the tendency of which, in the words of Schopenhauer, is 'eine Hinwendung zur Resignation, zur Verneinung des Willens zum Leben.'⁴ A dramatist who concerns himself with the conflict rather than with the victory of spiritual crises in human lives must therefore appear invariably 'negative.'

Another and greater objection was found in Ibsen's didactic purpose. 'A greater artist he might have been,' Mr. Max Beerbohm wrote, 'if he had had no moral purpose; for the greatest men, seeing and knowing all, know that moral purpose never can effect anything.'⁵ Yet there

¹ W. L. Courtney, *The Idea of Tragedy* (1900), p. 114.

² *Spectator*, July 20, 1872.

³ *New Review*, June 1891.

⁴ 'Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung,' Bd. ii, Kap. 37; *Zur Aesthetik der Dichtkunst*.

⁵ *Saturday Review*, July 22, 1899.

seems always to have existed a certain affinity between the drama and a moral purpose which at least makes Ibsen's case by no means an isolated one.¹ It may therefore seem reasonable with Mr. Monkhouse² to defend the didacticism of a dramatist, when it is within reasonable bounds, that is, when it is not allowed to get the upper hand of the artistic element, though to ask that it must be impartial (as Mr. Monkhouse does) is surely to raise claims for the impossible.

Whether a utilitarian purpose must necessarily derogate from the aesthetic value of a work of art has been the subject of much discussion. Guyau, in his work *Le Principe de l'art et de la poésie*, emphatically denied its validity. But without entering into that discussion, it must be admitted that the didactic purpose, as such, involves a danger to the purely artistic effect, and it is only too true that with Ibsen the moralist sometimes comes first, and the artist afterwards. So it is in *Pillars of Society*, where the purpose may justly be said to be 'the life-blood of his art.'³

However, the critics who most emphatically maintained that the discussion of social problems ought never to be admitted on the stage,⁴ raised their objections especially against those places where the author attacked the principles of conventional society, and not against those where his tendency most interfered with his art. It was not sentences like Lona Hessel's bombastic assurance that 'the spirit of freedom and truth are the pillars of society,'

¹ Thus the present drama in England is far from being free from a didactic tendency. Both the dramas of Mr. Shaw and Mr. John Galsworthy are pre-eminently didactic. Speaking of his play *Widowers' Houses*, Mr. Bernard Shaw said: 'It will be nothing else than didactic. Do you suppose I have gone to all this trouble to *amuse* the public? . . . My object is to instruct them' (*Star*, November 29, 1892. See A. Henderson, *G. B. Shaw*, p. 291).

² Allan Monkhouse, *Books and Plays* (1894).

³ Arthur Symons, *Universal Review*, 1889, p. 567.

⁴ R. Farquharson Sharp, 'Ibsen's Dramatic Experiment,' *Theatre*, January 1, 1889.

or Ellida Wangel's equally pompous declaration to choose 'under a sense of responsibility and personal freedom,' which appeared most inartistic to the English would-be-aesthetic commentators on Ibsen's plays. In their zeal to stamp Ibsen as a didactic moralist, they very often unduly exaggerated their charge. Thus a number of critics took *A Doll's House* to imply a plea for female emancipation, as all over Europe suffragettes had hailed the play as an advocate of women's rights. It is, however, obvious that it is not a woman's political or even social equality with men which is insisted upon in *A Doll's House*, but the claim for a free development of a married woman's spiritual individuality. 'I am convinced,' Mr. Wicksteed wrote,¹ 'that it is in this typical significance of marriage and not in any special interest in the so-called "woman-question" as such, that we are to seek the reason of Ibsen's constant recurrence to this theme.'

On the whole, Ibsen's sympathy with women has been apt to mislead some of his critics with regard to his object. It is true that 'women have received at his hands such generous treatment as perhaps their sex never experienced before from a master in satire.'² But does it from this necessarily follow that he 'hopes and believes that woman will redeem mankind?'³ Personally, I believe that Mr. Max Beerbohm was not far from the truth when he declared 'that 'had nature placed women in the ascendant, Ibsen would have been the first to tug them down.' 'No dispassionate reader of his plays,' he wrote, 'can fail to see that his sympathy with women is a mere reflex of his antipathy to their lords and masters.'

To return to the question of Ibsen's didacticism, it may

¹ *Four Lectures*, etc. (1892), p. 101.

² *Westminster Review*, 1889, vol. ii, p. 625. 'Ibsen is above everything the chivalrous poet of women and his tenderest passages are in honour of them' (*Temple Bar*, 1891, vol. iii, p. 97).

³ Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch, *Adventures in Criticism* (1896; the article written 1892).

⁴ *Saturday Review*, May 26, 1906.

be said that with the exception of *Pillars of Society* and perhaps certain scenes in *An Enemy of the People*, it is never allowed to interfere seriously with the artistic effect; while with *The Wild Duck* he entirely leaves all moral purposes far behind and enters into a new period, against which no accusation of didacticism can possibly be brought.

The critics who wanted persistently to stamp him as an inartistic writer accordingly had to change their weapons, and, as it happened, had the good luck to find in symbolism and allegory two instruments as useful and as effective as the charge of a didactic tendency had been before.

As Ibsen's plays gradually developed, a sense of beauty became ever more and more conspicuous. On the drama of his latest period, therefore, must the artistic prize be preferably conferred, as with these, taken together with his early dramatic poems, his greatest claim to the title of a literary artist will rest.

To say with Mr. Symons that Ibsen 'had the impulse, without the wings of a poet,' that he was 'never able for more than a moment to create poetry,' that 'the rhythm of a play of Ibsen is like that of a diagram in Euclid, it is the rhythm of logic,'¹ is only superficially true: there would be no difficulty in finding a number of examples where the *naïveté* of speech bears a closer relation to poetry than to the strict and absolute rules of logic. Who was ever more delightfully illogical than Hjalmar Ekdal, or Gina when Gregers Werle asks her, 'Do you believe I meant all for the best?' and she retorts, 'Yes, I daresay you did; but God forgive you all the same'?

The critics who failed to detect the poet in Ibsen also judged him to be dull and devoid of humour. 'It sounds strange to hear him charged with being dull,' Zanoni wrote,² 'for that is the one thing he is not.' Yet Mr. Oswald Crawford took him to be a 'dry, monotonous

¹ *Quarterly Review*, 1906, vol. ii, pp. 381, 396.

² Zanoni, *Ibsen and the Drama* (1894), p. 25.

writer, trivial, pointless, very often long-winded and wearisome.' ¹ 'After a very careful and critical reading of the eight social dramas,' the same writer declared, 'there is nothing which the most tolerant of western critics could set down as either wit or humour.' Thus also a writer in *Belgravia* ² declared the blackness to be 'totally unrelieved by a single gleam of humour; . . . the very servants . . . are so affected by the prevailing gloom, that when they have to announce tea or a visitor, they do it in sepulchral tones.' It would not be difficult to reply to this charge: the opening scene of *Pillars of Society* and Rørholdt's speech towards the end of the same play are only two of the least remarkable instances of Ibsen's humour. *An Enemy of the People* is full of humorous scenes, while the gloomy atmosphere of *The Wild Duck* is frequently interspersed with the most precious flashes of humour.

But the fact is that the charge of dullness against Ibsen was not so much due to an incapability to discover the humorous scenes in his plays, as to a constant disbelief in the author's comic intention. Thus when *The Wild Duck* was acted in London, the *Daily Telegraph*, finding Hjalmar Ekdal ludicrous, 'shrewdly' suspected that Mr. Laurence Irving shared its opinion, because 'he played Hjalmar Ekdal, the sublime egoist, so magnificently that the house pealed with laughter.' ³

¹ *Fortnightly Review*, 1891, vol. i, p. 725.

² *Belgravia*, 1894, 'Ibsen and the Morbid Taint.'

³ See W. Archer, *Theatrical World* of 1897, p. 148.

Mr. Archer, I believe, has somewhere drawn attention to the acute humour of the scene where Hjalmar Ekdal tells Gregers Werle how his father had contemplated suicide. Hjalmar explains how old Ekdal's courage had failed him at the decisive moment, 'so broken, so demoralized was he even then.' A minute later he tells how he himself has also wanted to die.

'GREGERS: But you did not fire ?

'HJALMAR: No; at the decisive moment I won the victory over myself. But I can assure you it takes some courage to choose life under circumstances like those.'

While some critics thus found Ibsen devoid of humour, others found his literary form 'crude and immature.'¹ His 'absence of style,' Henry James wrote, '. . . is extraordinary.'² 'I call the fascination of Ibsen charmless,' the same writer declared, '. . . because he holds us without bribing us.'

Mr. Courtney could find no suggestion of a 'world-catastrophe' in Ibsen's plays, which, according to him, lacked essentially the tragic atmosphere.³ To illustrate this statement he selected for an example *An Enemy of the People*, a play never intended for a tragedy, thus rendering his own argument of no value. But what of the atmosphere of *Ghosts*, *Rosmersholm*, and *The Wild Duck*? If not the atmosphere of a 'world-catastrophe,' they must at least be said to suggest the atmosphere of a catastrophe of human beings, which need be of no less dramatic effect and of no less literary interest than those which the introduction of any 'world-catastrophe' would convey. But then, of course, these plays do not concern themselves with such illustrious atmospheres as those which, according to Mr. Courtney, are essential to the tragic idea. Neither the Ekdal studio nor the Alving residence, nor even the mansion of Rosmersholm has the historic and traditional air of Glamys Castle, Melrose Abbey, Carisbrooke, or Carlton House Terrace!

Mr. Courtney was not the only critic who declared that Ibsen lacked the essential qualities of a tragedian. Mr. Clement Scott, generously admitting that there were ideas in *Ghosts* that 'would have inspired a tragic poet,' held that they had been vulgarized and debased by a suburban Ibsen: 'You want a Shakespeare, or a Byron, or a Browning,' he wrote, 'to attack the subject-matter of *Ghosts* as it ought to be attacked.'⁴ Thus also Mr.

¹ W. L. Courtney, *Quarterly Review*, 1891, vol. i, p. 305.

² *New Review*, June 1891.

³ W. L. Courtney, *The Idea of Tragedy* (1900), p. 122.

⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, March 14, 1891 (quoted from W. Archer in *Pall Mall Gazette*, April 8, 1891).

Oswald Crawford, who, denying Ibsen both the humorous and the tragic faculty, doubtfully asked whether he would 'leave behind him a Lord Foppington, a Tartuffe, a Hamlet, or a Cordelia?'¹

However, the gravest of all objections was the one raised against Ibsen's dramatic construction. Mr. Shaw has rightly said that the technical novelty of Ibsen's plays lies first of all in the introduction of the discussion.² This, however, implies a natural decrease in action. If the Aristotelian definition of tragedy, regarding character as subsidiary to plot,³ is to be applied in its strictest sense also to the modern tragedy, it is true that Ibsen must in many cases appear essentially undramatic, especially in his later dramas, where the analytical method constantly gains ground at the expense of the synthetical one. 'He does not show how the tragedy grows,' Mr. Courtney wrote,⁴ 'but, breaking it into its component parts, he traces the effects of the tragedy on his characters.' This is true; but that the analytical method should be 'a characteristic rather of a philosophic essay than of a drama'⁵ is a view that will only be maintained by critics who keep close to the Aristotelian principle. To eliminate the analytical method as naturally opposed to art would be to exclude a number of eminent writers from the ranks of literary artists. George Meredith, for one, would have to be speedily disposed of. But, people of less classical convictions than Mr. Courtney might ask, is it not a strength rather than a weakness in Ibsen, that characters are revealed and developed through discussion rather

¹ *Fortnightly Review*, 1891, vol. i, p. 725.

² *Quintessence of Ibsenism*, ed. 1913, p. 205.

Cf. 'Dans les Revenants, comme dans la plupart des pièces d'Ibsen, tout se passe en conversations, en questions philosophiques agitées . . . chacun des personnages exposait tour à tour son état d'âme' (F. Sarcey). (See *Theatre*, July 1, 1896.)

³ Aristotle, *Poetics*, vi, 9-12.

⁴ *Idea of Tragedy*, 1900, p. 103.

⁵ W. L. Courtney, *Quarterly Review*, 1891, vol. i, p. 305.

than through action? ¹ Action is frequently identical with accident, and accidents, as Mr. Bernard Shaw has said, 'are not dramatic; they are only anecdotic.' ² Of accidents there are few in Ibsen's plays, though the situation may sometimes appear a little worked up, as, for instance, when the woman who has converted Lövborg turns out to be an old schoolfellow of Hedda and Lövborg himself an old friend of Tesman. But 'the catastrophe,' to quote Mr. Shaw again, 'even when it seems forced and when the ending of the play would be more tragic without it,' is never an accident.' ⁴

Moreover, Ibsen is always careful to keep himself in the background. His characters possess a 'strong individuality, which they preserve throughout,' ⁵ and 'there are no villains and no heroes' ⁶ in his plays.

The strongest proof of Ibsen's dramatic power is, however, the success of his plays when acted in public. Mr. H. A. Kennedy alone found his figures 'vague on the stage.' ⁷ This opinion was emphatically countered by Mr. Arthur Symonds, when he declared ⁸ that 'no playwright has created a more probable gallery of characters': 'Ibsen in a single stage direction,' he wrote, 'gives you more than you would find in a chapter of a novel.' And the same had been pointed out earlier by Henry James, who, speaking of Ibsen's 'peculiar blessedness to actors,' ⁹ wrote: 'In fact the series of Ibsen's "social dramas" is a dazzling

¹ 'His subject is always, like the subjects of all first-rate men, primarily an idea' (Henry James, *Essays in London and Elsewhere*, 1893).

² *Quintessence of Ibsenism* (ed. 1913), p. 195.

³ Thus it has been said that *John Gabriel Borkman* would have been a greater tragedy and an artistically greater work if Ibsen had left the last act unwritten and let the play end with Erhart's departure.

⁴ *Quintessence of Ibsenism* (ed. 1913), p. 200.

⁵ Zanoni, *Ibsen and the Drama* (1894), p. 42.

⁶ *Quintessence of Ibsenism* (ed. 1913), p. 194.

⁷ *Nineteenth Century*, August 1891.

⁸ *Quarterly Review*, 1906, vol. ii, p. 394.

⁹ Henry James, *Essays in London and Elsewhere* (1893).

array of parts.’¹ This was also confirmed by Mr. Herbert Waring, who declared² that he had never experienced so much pleasurable excitement in the perusal or representation of any piece as he had felt during the reading of *A Doll's House*. ‘I must confess,’ he wrote, ‘to a keen and increasing delight, night after night, in playing Helmer.’

This power in Ibsen to make the work interesting to the actors may partly be ascribed to the qualities of his dialogue. Mr. Arthur Symons has accused Ibsen in his social dramas of having ‘tried to make poems without words.’ ‘Men’s speech in great drama,’ he wrote, ‘is as much higher than the words they would use in real life, as their thoughts are higher than those words.’³ But this is inconsistent with the principle of the realistic drama as conceived by Ibsen, who in writing his social dramas had no intention whatever to ‘make poems.’ Are we not rather to say that one of the great merits of Ibsen’s dialogue is that ‘his people say and do at a given point exactly what they might be expected to say or do’? ‘Here, at least, Ibsen is at one with Aristotle: ‘A person of a given character,’ says that philosopher,⁴ ‘should speak or act in a given way, by the rule either of necessity or probability.’

As for the impression made upon his audience, who can fail to recognize the truth in Zanoni’s assertion⁵ that when Ibsen ‘waves his magic wand over the common events of life, they become completely transformed beneath the charm of his spell, and assume all kinds of new shapes, revealing to us a hidden beauty, which before we had never even suspected’?

If Mr. Monkhouse declared that Ibsen’s field was narrow,

¹ *New Review*, June 1891.

² *Theatre*, October 1, 1894.

³ Mr. Arthur Symons in *Quarterly Review*, 1906, vol. ii, p. 396.

⁴ W. D. Adams, *Theatre*, July 1, 1896.

⁵ Aristotle, *Poetics*, xv, 6.

⁶ Zanoni, *Ibsen and the Drama* (1894), p. 122.

he did it ample justice by describing it as 'a fruitful field of thought.'¹ 'There are those,' C. E. Raimond wrote,² ' . . . who . . . bear witness in their hearts that the poet's greeting . . . has meant for them a great awakening, an unmatched joy.'

It is this fact that accounts for the interest taken in Ibsen's plays in England as elsewhere, and not, as Mr. Courtney suggested, 'a pleasant piquancy in literatures that were only born yesterday.'³

As for the attacks on Ibsen in England, it is impossible not to see that for the greater part they were the productions of inferior critics, whose opinions were largely directed by their personal animosity, and possibly also by a certain jealousy, not always sufficiently disguised.

'For my own part, I do not endorse all Ibsen's views,' Mr. Shaw wrote, 'I even prefer my own plays to his in some respects; but I hope I know a great man from a little one, as far as my comprehension of such things goes.'⁴ And though Mr. Sydney Grundy did 'not even like Ibsen,' he declared that he could not help boxing the ears of the little boy 'scribbling rude words on the pedestal of a colossus.'⁵

Yet it is evident that the storm of invective which raged around Ibsen's plays helped to accomplish exactly that which it was meant to prevent. Furious assaults and calumnious epithets will always bring an author's name into the foreground and arouse curiosity about his work.

Ibsen had, moreover, the good luck to find champions in England, whose devotion to his cause and whose natural abilities were the best guarantees for his worth.

Mr. Shaw's *Quintessence of Ibsenism*, though perhaps

¹ A. Monkhouse, *Books and Plays* (1894).

² 'Ibsen, the Force,' *Academy*, July 22, 1899.

³ *Quarterly Review*, 1891, vol. i, p. 305.

⁴ *Saturday Review*, January 30, 1897.

⁵ Letter to the *Era*, January 17, 1891 (quoted from W. Archer, *Theatrical World* for 1893, p. 165, note).

not entirely free from a certain taint of propagandism, is a most valuable contribution to the study of Ibsen's plays. As the dramatic critic of the *Saturday Review*, its author was of great service to Ibsen; while Mr. William Archer, who had also volunteered for the difficult and ungrateful task of translating the whole range of Ibsen's dramas into English, devoted himself to a persistent and faithful championship of the Norwegian dramatist. Tracing the development of the struggle, we find Mr. Archer now reviewing Ibsen's plays and pointing out the misconceptions arising from bad translations; now rescuing his name from connexion with inferior imitations; now replying to stupid and unfair attacks. What a long and wearisome task this must have been will be easily understood by all who are familiar with the nature of those attacks which he had to face. That, nevertheless, he kept on and even brought the struggle forward to a victorious result is an example of an almost singular perseverance on the part of a critic.

§ 3. IBSEN AND THE MODERN ENGLISH DRAMA

In order to discuss the extent of Ibsen's influence on modern English drama, one has to consider the fact that some advance would probably have taken place without his assistance. Simply to compare the English drama of to-day with the plays in vogue at the time when Ibsen was first introduced to the English public would naturally convey a very exaggerated impression as to the influence exercised by the Norwegian playwright. There can be no doubt that a vague demand for a renaissance of the drama existed in England before Ibsen's name was ever heard of. For this reason it is as erroneous to trace all the development and progress in modern English drama back to the influence of Ibsen, as it would be to deny that his influence has acted as the main stimulus towards the accomplishment and realization of that dormant demand.

Ibsen's plays were first produced in London during the

years which witnessed the successes of Oscar Wilde's plays and Sir Arthur Pinero's farces. As for Wilde, there is not the faintest trace of an Ibsenite influence in the whole range of his dramatic works, and the only allusion to the Norwegian dramatist which he is reported ever to have made informs us that he was much attracted by Hedda Gabler's remark about Eilert Lövborg 'coming home with vine-leaves in his hair.'¹ In Sir Arthur Pinero, on the other hand, Ibsen's influence became strongly conspicuous; and there also were other authors, more or less gifted, who followed in the steps of the Norwegian playwright. 'A strong dirty man has written plays, and now every feeble dirty person thinks himself a dramatist,' was a somewhat supercilious remark of Mr. Henry Arthur Jones.²

As there were critics who pointed out the startling novelty of Ibsen's ideas,³ there were authors who tried to turn his dramatic technique to account.

Mr. Austin Fryers, indeed, went so far as to try to improve on Ibsen's method and wrote a play called *Rosmer of Rosmersholm* (1891), as he tells us, for the single purpose of proving that Ibsen was 'not dramatic where the opportunity of being so was afforded.'⁴

Mr. Fryers' play was a dramatization of all the incidents previous to Ibsen's own drama. But the situations were so badly worked out and contained such an affluence of soliloquies and 'asides,' that their highly dramatic material was wasted, the play leaving no other impression on the

¹ Robert Sherard, *The Real Oscar Wilde*, p. 135.

² H. A. Jones, *The Renaissance of the English Drama* (1895), p. 340.

³ 'I have heard things of young couples since Ibsen became known to us which encouraged me to believe that they had found in his gloomy exhibition of incompatibilities and wayward affinities an unexpected gospel' (Sir Edward Russell in *Ibsen on his Merits* [1897], pp. 52-3).

'It is extraordinarily difficult to make Englishmen think,' Mr. Bernard Shaw wrote to *Politiken* (March 20, 1898). 'No English playwright has ever done it. But Ibsen *has*.'

⁴ Preface to *Rosmer of Rosmersholm*, p. xi.

reader than an irritation at the chaos of tragic notions surrounding the debased and vulgarized characters of Ibsen's original play.

The influence of Ibsen in England may, on the whole, be best studied in connexion with the history of the Independent Theatre, which was founded in 1891 by Mr. J. T. Grein on the model of M. Antoine's Théâtre Libre in Paris. The Independent Theatre, which, according to Mr. Bernard Shaw, would never have come into existence but for the plays of Ibsen,¹ had the courage to put up *Ghosts* for its first performance, and, what was still more important, by producing Mr. Shaw's own play *Widowers' Houses* (1893) actually made way for the modern English drama in which the method of the new dramatic movement, initiated by Ibsen, was adopted.

The discussion of Mr. Shaw's indebtedness to Ibsen is of a rather delicate nature. To say, with Georg Brandes,² that in the first instance Mr. Shaw owes his tendency towards rebellion against the existent social order to Ibsen is decidedly incorrect, as his war against hypocrisy and prejudice is the outcome of his own individual character. Besides, Mr. Shaw was a socialist years before he was acquainted with the social dramas of Ibsen. The marked similarity between *Widowers' Houses* and *An Enemy of the People* did, however, result in the natural suggestion that Mr. Shaw here was a follower of Ibsen. He himself has vigorously denied the conjecture. Before the production of the play he publicly stated that the first two acts were written before he had ever heard of Ibsen³: 'What! I a follower of Ibsen? My good sir, as far as England is concerned, Ibsen is a follower of mine.'⁴ And this statement may be taken to be mainly true; which in fact is more than can be said of Mr. Shaw's self-assertions in general.

¹ Shaw, Preface to *Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant* (1898), vol. i.

² *Politiken*, December 29, 1902. (See A. Henderson, *G. B. Shaw* [1911], p. 301.)

³ A. Henderson, *G. B. Shaw* (1911), p. 294.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

On the whole it seems natural with his biographer to say that Mr. Shaw in the eighties had been 'forging towards precisely similar conclusions' as those of Ibsen.¹ But when Shaw declares that for the life of him he cannot find the least evidence of how Ibsen revolutionized the technique of English drama,² his opinion is a good deal less trustworthy. What he wrote in 1891 in his book on Ibsen, about the 'technical novelties of the Ibsen and post-Ibsen plays,' was certainly not to the same effect. Nor were the following lines written in 1898: 'The influence which Ibsen has had in England is almost equal to the influence which three revolutions, six crusades, a couple of foreign invasions, and an earthquake would produce. The Norman Conquest was a mere nothing compared with the Norwegian Conquest.'³ But with regard to Ibsen, it will seem that Mr. Shaw, the playwright, holds slightly different views from those once maintained by the dramatic critic of the *Saturday Review*.

In spite of Mr. Shaw's own denial of his indebtedness to Ibsen, the fact remains that there are points of similarity between his plays and those of the Norwegian dramatist which are too striking to be regarded as merely accidental.

How the so-called respectable classes do not hesitate to turn to account the impotency of the poor and ignorant and to profit by morally indefensible proceedings is the subject of *Widowers' Houses* as it is that of *An Enemy of the People*. Both plays are powerful thrusts against the poisonous shams of modern civilization. Further, in *Mrs. Warren's Profession* Mr. Shaw is seen to adopt Ibsen's peculiar retrospective method, placing all the important events at a time previous to the rise of the curtain, while the play itself is concerned with the analytical working out of the effects on its characters. Vivie Warren, it has been rightly said,⁴ is Nora as daughter instead of Nora as wife; while the sudden revelation of the relationship between her and

¹ A. Henderson, *G. B. Shaw* (1911), p. 269.

² *Ibid.*, p. 416.

³ *Politiken*, March 20, 1898.

⁴ A. Henderson, *G. B. Shaw* (1911), p. 301.

Frank Gardner recalls the scene in *Ghosts* where Oswald is told that Regina is his half-sister. In *Candida*, again, there is much that reminds one of *The Lady from the Sea*. Perhaps the similarity between the *dénouement* of the latter and the closing scene of *Candida* has been somewhat unduly exaggerated. The stranger meant more to the nervous Ellida Wangel than Eugene Marchbank ever did to the unaffected Candida. In Ellida's case there was the question of a choice, while to Candida there was not. Candida loved her husband, and the idea of deserting him never entered her mind. With Eugene she had only carried on a sort of heedless play, her maternal instincts being attracted and charmed by his youthful passion.

To search for further corresponding points in Mr. Shaw and Ibsen than those already indicated, I take to be more than perilous. Mr. Huneker's description of Louka in *Arms and the Man* as 'a free paraphrase of Regina in *Ghosts*'¹ is correct only if understood not to suggest any possible influence by the one on the other. With the plays already mentioned Mr. Shaw's indebtedness to Ibsen must be said to be at an end so far as ideas are concerned. The fact that the ideas of his later plays have become less interesting and of a less serious intent than those of his earlier dramas is a matter irrelevant to the subject in hand.

Mr. Shaw's dramas were, however, not the only English plays that showed reminiscences of Ibsen. John Todhunter's *The Black Cat*, also produced by the Independent Theatre (1894), reads like a caricature of an Ibsen play. The symbolic title itself suggests *The Wild Duck*, while the play presents a rehash of confused Ibsenite ideas. We are confronted with the well-known unhappy family-milieu: there is a woman who holds that marriage tends to reduce all married people 'to a dead-level of commonplace,' a mother who speaks roughly to her daughter, wishing that she had never been born (cf. Hjalmar Ekdal and Hedvig), and a daughter who resolves to die rather than to bear her mother's

¹ James Huneker, *Iconoclasts* (1906), p. 246.

scolding (cf. again Hedvig Ekdal). Mr. Todhunter does not, indeed, kill Undine. She is brought back and put to bed—'poor little ugly duck,' as her father calls her, with a rather too straightforward reference to the source of the stolen property.

In Sir Arthur Pinero's case the influence of Ibsen is, as already mentioned, very conspicuous. Like Mr. Shaw, Sir Arthur has energetically repudiated the charge of his indebtedness to Ibsen: 'I can only regard Ibsen's seventieth birthday,' he wrote to *Politiken* (March 18, 1898), 'as an opportunity for congratulation, not as an opportunity of criticizing his works, least of all when one, like myself, is so far removed from the localities where his pieces take place, from the people he describes and from the circumstances which influence him, or on which he has an influence.'

Sir Arthur Pinero had written serious plays before he had read Ibsen. But a comparison between *The Profligate* of 1889 and *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* of 1893 shows an enormous advance in technical skill, which, although it of course need not necessarily be wholly due to the influence of Ibsen, yet admits of some foundation for such an assumption. Both plays are meant to show how a dissolute life before marriage will always avenge itself afterwards. In both plays the victim commits suicide. But *The Profligate* is so full of numerous coincidences and soliloquies that only for this reason it makes a very inferior piece of acting. In *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* the coincidences and soliloquies have disappeared, and this fact, together with the less exaggerated stress laid on the moral of the play, bears emphatic testimony to the great development of its author's technique during the course of those four years.

There are in *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* no ideas which can be called peculiarly Ibsenite. But in *The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith*, produced only two years later (1895), one meets with most of Ibsen's favourite ideas. Agnes's first marriage has been an unhappy one. Like

Nora, she was treated 'like a woman in a harem.' When her husband died, she took to nursing, and when the play starts, we meet her as the mistress of one of her former patients. Like Rebecca in *Rosmersholm*, she dreams of an intellectual collaboration with the man she loves: 'We shall write much together urging our views on this subject of marriage.' This dream of Agnes reminds one of Rebecca's remark to Rosmer in the second act of *Rosmersholm*: 'How beautiful it was when we sat in the twilight, in the room downstairs, helping each other to lay out our new life-plans. You were to set resolutely to work in the world—the living world of to-day, as you said. You were to go as a messenger of emancipation from home to home; to win over minds and wills; to create noble men around you in wider and wider circles.' Like Rebecca and Rosmer, Agnes and Lucas are confronted with the problem whether platonic friendship is possible between man and woman. Rosmer believed that his and Rebecca's 'common faith in a pure comradeship between man and woman' would 'presuppose a quiet, happy, and peaceful life.' So does also Agnes, although she is already the mistress of the man she loves. 'Don't you think,' she says to Lucas, 'that such a union as ours would be much braver, much more truly courageous, if it could but be—be . . . devoid of passion, if passion had no share in it?' In another play of Sir Arthur Pinero's, *The Benefit of a Doubt* (1895), the problem turns up a second time, when Theo is teaching us that between the two sexes no friendship can exist which is altogether devoid of a sexual element. Again one is reminded of the scene in *Rosmersholm*, where Rosmer says to Rebecca:

'ROSMER: The question that haunts me is this: were we two not deceiving ourselves all the time when we called our relation friendship?

'REBECCA: You mean that it might as well have been called——

'ROSMER: Love, yes, Rebecca, that is what I mean.'

The relation between Agnes Ebbsmith and Lucas Cleeve meets with its crisis in a scene which again recalls a similar situation in *A Doll's House*. Lucas's family has suggested a compromise: he shall return to his wife, but may still keep Agnes as a mistress if he chooses to. Agnes feels sure he will repudiate the degrading proposal. She does not doubt it even for a moment. The greater is the blow when Lucas, with no sign of indignation, grasps at the suggestion. It is a situation strictly parallel to that in *A Doll's House*, where Nora expects Helmer to take on himself the guilt of the forgery. To the man it is in both cases the thought of his public career which proves stronger than the devotion to the woman he loves. And it is this egotism on his part that suddenly opens the eyes of the woman. It destroys her love, it pulls down with one blow the heroic picture of the man which her love has erected, and in the worship of which she has been wont to indulge. It is the final disillusion and the psychological turning-point of her affections. Like Nora in the scene where she sits down with Helmer to talk over the story of her marriage, Agnes turns her whole mind against Lucas, the man she has loved, who has proved unworthy of her affection: 'You and I! What a partnership it has been! How base, and gross, and wicked, almost from the very beginning! We know each other now thoroughly—how base and wicked it would remain! No, go your way, Lucas, and let me go mine.' Nora told Helmer that she left him to cultivate the development of her personal individuality—Agnes informs Lucas that she intends to go away 'to think.'

There are still more points of resemblance between *The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith* and the Ibsen dramas. Thus the scenic effect of Agnes hurling the Bible on the fire reminds one of Hedda Gabler when she burns the manuscript of Eilert Lövborg. One may perhaps also, with one of Sir A. Pinero's critics,¹ trace Mrs. Thorpe's fancies

¹ Hamilton Fyfe, *A. W. Pinero* (1902), p. 172.

about her dead child back to Agnes's solicitude for her boy's grave in *Brand*.

It is certainly a little difficult to understand that the author of *The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith* should consider himself 'so far removed from the localities where Ibsen's pieces take place' and 'from the people he describes.'

Among the most modern of English dramatists, there is hardly any who can be said to have received a direct influence from Ibsen to any great degree. The psychological drama, as represented by Mr. Granville Barker and Mr. John Masefield, is mainly of a different order from that of Ibsen. Mr. John Galsworthy is didactic and iconoclastic like Ibsen. But different nationality and modern ideas forbid any closer resemblance between his works and those of Ibsen.¹ Only one case admits of a comparison, and even that is not a very striking one. Stanley Houghton's comedy *The Younger Generation* (1910), the subject of which deals with the older generation's lack of appreciation of the younger one, is in parts also a satire on the social conditions in England, in which capacity it recalls the subject of *Pillars of Society*. As in Ibsen's play, the scene is laid in a country town. Mr. Kennion, the father, has not, indeed, a record of sins like that of Bernick; but he has once in his youth been drunk, and being interrogated by his family, has not the courage to confess it. As in Ibsen's play, the family-conventionality is put into strong juxtaposition with common-sense and a frank view of life. It is here Mr. Kennion's own brother who is playing the part of Johan Tønnesen and Lona Hessel. As a youth he was unable to bear the conventionality of the English middle-class with its religious hypocrisy and pedantic morality, and went abroad and settled in Hamburg (the play was

¹ 'The influence of Ibsen's writings is observable . . . in most of the serious work of English dramatic authorship during the last few years, and more particularly during the last three' (Mr. P. C. Standing in *Ibsen on his Merits* [1897], p. 110).

J. K. Jerome was, however, wrong when he as late as 1898 believed Ibsen's influence on English drama to be in the ascendant (*Politiken*, March 20, 1898).

written before the war). But *The Younger Generation* was not primarily intended for a social satire. Apart from the outward resemblance in atmosphere there is nothing in the play that can be said to show any distinct similarity to the social dramas of the Norwegian writer.

On the whole, Ibsen's influence on English drama is mainly confined to the last ten years of the nineteenth century—in particular to the years which coincide with the existence of the Independent Theatre (1891–7). Only of that short period can it be said that the ideas of Ibsen prevailed in English dramatic art. It may perhaps be urged that even then the plagiarism was almost unconscious¹: it certainly was an incentive, a necessary stepping-stone towards the realization of an English drama on the new principles. If Ibsen's ideas no longer assert themselves in the English drama, most playwrights are still directly or indirectly indebted to the technical novelty of his plays. The final disappearance of soliloquies and 'asides' must more or less be placed to his credit. In this sense it is true that 'Ibsen's craftsmanship has formed a model for succeeding dramatists,'² and—so far as England is concerned—those technical services remain the essential result of his influence.

¹ Ashley Dukes, *Modern Dramatists* (1911), p. 39.

² R. Farquharson Sharp, *Short History of the English Stage* (1909), p. 253.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

HAVING brought the account of English interest in Norwegian literature down to the year 1900, there only remains to say a few words by way of conclusion.

A comprehensive view of what has been the subject of this inquiry will show us three separate yet mutually connected phases into which English interest in Norwegian culture may be divided.

(1) To the first of these belongs the interest taken in old Norse literature, which started during the second half of the eighteenth century. This, as has been shown, was an outcome of the Romantic movement and originated in the desire for a fuller knowledge of the history of the past. Poets and antiquarians were equally interested in the subject (Gray, Percy, etc.), and even when the days of the Romantic movement drew to a close, it survived on historic, scholarly, and literary grounds. During the whole of the nineteenth century we can trace the ever-increasing interest in this subject—from the earliest translations of the Sagas, through Carlyle and William Morris, to writers of the present day. The Viking Society in London is only one of the proofs of the firm position which Norse literature now occupies in England.

(2) The second phase reflects the interest taken in Norway and the Norwegian people, this interest probably having started as a result of the awakened curiosity about Norse subjects. English travelling in Norway remained, on the whole, unusual till some time into the nineteenth century, when it suddenly attained an unforeseen popu-

larity, which prevailed for years and years till it again decreased towards the end of the century.

(3) An interest in modern Norwegian literature was first exhibited on a small scale by the travellers. Thus we get the third phase, again as a natural outcome of the second one. Several translations appeared between the years 1850 and 1880.¹ Yet the writers previous to Ibsen and Björnson were never duly noticed in England. When stating this it must, however, be remembered how completely all knowledge of Scandinavian literature in English-speaking countries has always been restricted by the fact that so few people have been able to read it except in translations. This has naturally given the Scandinavian literatures much less chance than those of France, Italy, or Germany. Besides, there is still another factor to bear in mind: many of the best works in the Norwegian literature of the first half of the nineteenth century (such, for instance, as those of Wergeland) have been almost untranslatable, or at any rate of such a character that it would demand of the translator the highest daring in undertaking and skill in performing.

The way to a real knowledge of modern Norwegian literature in England was not laid till the early seventies, when Mr. Gosse began to draw attention to men like Ibsen and Björnson. During the remaining part of the century an interest in the works of these two authors was distinctly noticeable. Yet, except in the case of Ibsen, it turned out to be of only temporary durability. Not the slightest note was ever taken of many writers of great talent, and it is lamentable to reflect that an author of such a striking individuality as Amalie Skram

¹ A. Munch, *Solomon de Caus*, a lyrical drama, translated by J. Chapman (privately printed, 1855); A. Munch, *Lord William Russell*, an historic tragedy, translated by J. Chapman (privately printed, 1858); A. Munch, *William and Rachel Russell*, translated by J. H. Burt (1862); M. Thoresen, *Signe's History* (1865); H. Winsnes, *Norwegian Stories* (1868); A. Munch, *The Maid of Norway*, translated by Mrs. R. Birkbeck (London, 1878).

never should have been even heard of. In fact, it can be said that English interest in Norwegian literature—as far as it was rooted in any curiosity about Norwegian culture—grew fainter towards the close of the century. I have said that Ibsen was an exception. But the attention which he attracted in England was of a purely intellectual, cosmopolitan character, and it is no exaggeration to say that with the account of Ibsen in England the subject of English interest in modern Norwegian literature is practically exhausted.¹ Of the Norwegian writers still living, no one has yet in any way been prominently brought before the English public. Of Knut Hamsun, there existed up to a recent date translations of only two books.² This may seem strange, the more so when reflecting the immense popularity which that author enjoys with other foreign nations, especially with the Russians. Occasional translations have, of course, appeared from time to time,³ but these have not always been the best—nor have they given a fair impression of the standard of Norwegian literature at the present moment.

¹ As a proof of English interest in the subject during the last twenty years of the nineteenth century, it ought perhaps to be mentioned that the *Athenaeum* between 1882 and 1902 contained a yearly contribution on the Norwegian literature of that year. As these articles, however, were written by Norwegians, they have not been considered here. They were brought to an end by the year 1900-1, the year of Ibsen's latest play. The articles are to be found in the *Athenaeum*:—(By H. Jaeger) 1882, vol. ii, p. 888; 1883, vol. ii, p. 853; 1884, vol. ii, p. 846; 1886, vol. i, p. 22; 1888, vol. ii, p. 23; 1889, vol. ii, p. 24; 1890, vol. ii, p. 23; 1891, vol. ii, p. 27; 1892, vol. ii, p. 23; (By Chr. Brinchmann) 1895, vol. ii, p. 21; 1896, vol. ii, p. 23; 1897, vol. ii, p. 24; 1898, vol. ii, p. 23; 1899, vol. ii, p. 24; 1900, vol. ii, p. 24; 1901, vol. ii, p. 24.

² *Hunger*, translated by George Egerton (1899), and *Shallow Soil*, translated by C. C. Hyllested (1914). An English translation of a third book by Hamsun, *Growth of the Soil*, has just been published (1920) by Gyldendal's newly instituted branch in London.

³ Johan Bojer, *The Power of a Lie* (1908), *Treacherous Ground* (1912), *Our Kingdom*, translated by Jessie Muir (1920).

No doubt there is much in the recent literature of Norway that would prove worth the trouble of translation. It is only a matter of undertaking. The success which Wiers-Jensen's play *Anne Pedersdotter* attained, as performed by Granville Barker, ought to have encouraged and aroused new interest in modern Norwegian literature.

And it is much to be regretted that a dramatist like Gunnar Heiberg has never been given the chance to appear before an English audience.

But as the champions of Ibsen—Edmund Gosse and William Archer—gradually lost their contact with Norwegian literature, as the stream of English tourists to Norway year by year grew smaller and smaller, only to give way to an invasion of Germans, the eyes of the English public in general also were conducted into new directions, away from the literature of the North.

This is to be regretted not only from a Norwegian point of view. The fact that England has lately so totally ignored Norwegian literature, while Germany has shown an excessive and ever-increasing interest in it, has naturally led to a more intimate intellectual contact between Norway and Germany. Not that this has been a deliberate choice on the part of the Norwegians.¹ But intellectual relations are to some extent subject to rules similar to those which prevail in business, where an order is followed by an exchange of goods. The German admiration for Norwegian literature could naturally not fail to flatter the national vanity of the Norwegians, and thus the latter came to regard themselves bound to repay the German tribute by a similar interest in the literature of Germany.

The fact that Norwegian books, even of an inferior rank, are frequently translated into German, and that Norwegian plays are put on German stages, has also meant a pecuniary advantage to Norwegian authors, the import-

¹ See an article in the *Contemporary Review* [for November 1915, 'Norway and Germanism,' by M. M. Mjælde, London editor of the *Verdens Gang* (Christiania).

ance of which it is difficult to overlook. I take this to be the chief explanation of the curious fact, that while the Norwegian people during the European War—as a consequence of an instinctive and natural sympathy for England—felt strongly for the Allies, several authors expressed themselves in favour of the Germans.

However, there are reasons to hope that a nearer intellectual intercourse between England and Norway may again be established. The programme of the *Anglo-Norse Society*, founded in London in 1918, seems to give promise for the promotion of such contact. Recent Norwegian legacies, which aim at helping Norwegian students during their studies in England, are also a welcome step in the same direction. Finally, it is to be hoped that the translations issued by the *American-Scandinavian Foundation* in New York and the establishment of an English branch of the great Scandinavian publishing firm, Gyldendal, in London (1920) will prove of valuable service in assisting to spread general knowledge of Scandinavian literature also in England.

APPENDIXES
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APPENDIX A

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1834. John Barrow, Junr., 'Excursions in the North of Europe.'
1835. Lieut. W. H. Breton, 'Scandinavian Sketches.'
1836. Samuel Laing, 'A Journal of a Residence in Norway.'
1840. R. G. Latham, 'Norway and the Norwegians,' 2 vols.
1840. W. Bilton, 'Two Summers in Norway,' 2 vols.
1840. Robert Bremner, 'Excursions in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.'
1842. John Milford, 'Norway and its Laplanders in 1841.'
1847. The Rev. Alfred Smith, 'Sketches in Norway and Sweden.'

1848. W. Wittich, 'A Visit to the Western Coast of Norway.'
1850. T. Forester, 'Norway in 1848 and 1849.'
1853. J. D. Forbes, 'Norway and its Glaciers in 1851.'
1853. Selina Bunbury, 'Life in Sweden with Excursions in Norway.'
1853. T. Forester, 'Norway and its Scenes' (including reprint of *Price's Journal*).
1854. The Rev. Henry Newland, 'Forest Scenes in Norway and Sweden.'
1854. L. Lloyd, 'Scandinavian Adventures.'
1855. C. W. Rothery, 'Notes on a Yacht Voyage to Hardangerfjord.'
1856. F. Metcalfe, 'Oxonian in Norway,' 2 vols.
1856. Selina Bunbury, 'A Summer in the North of Europe.'
1857. Emily Lowe, 'Unprotected Females in Norway.'
1857. X. and Y., 'A Long Vacation Ramble in Norway.'
1858. F. Metcalfe, 'Oxonian in Thelemarken,' 2 vols.
1859. W. M. Williams, 'Through Norway with Knapsack.'
1861. Francis M. Wyndham, 'Wild Life in the Fields of Norway.'
1862. 'Gamle Norge, or Our Holiday in Scandinavia.'
1864. Rev. M. R. Barnard, 'Sport in Norway.'
1867. C. J. Elton, 'Norway.'
1867. John Bowden, 'Norway, Its People, Products, and Institutions.'
1868. D. de V. Beauclerc, 'Summer in Norway.'
1869. J. Bowden, 'Naturalist in Norway.'
1869. H. Macmillan, 'Holidays in Norway.'
1871. Barnard, 'Sketches,' etc.
1871. J. R. Campbell, 'How to see Norway.'
1873. H. Smith, 'Tent Life in Norway.'
1875. C. Garvagh, 'Pilgrim in Norway.'
1877. E. L. L. Arnold, 'Summer Holiday in Scandinavia.'
1877. W. M. Williams, 'Through Norway with Ladies.'
1878. A. W. M. C. Kennedy, 'To Arctic Regions.'
1879. M. F. D., 'Norway and the Vöringfos.'
1880. C. W. Wood, 'Round about Norway.'
1881. S. Peel, 'Our Trip in Norway.'
1881. Du Chaillu, 'Land of the Midnight Sun.'

1881. 'Narrative of the Voyage of the Argonauts in 1880.'
1881. K. E. Tyler, 'Scandinavian Summer.'
1881. J. C. Phythian, 'Three Years After.'
1881. F. Vincent, 'Norsk, Lapp, and Finn.'
1882. (Lees and Clutterbuck), 'Three in Norway.'
1882. J. Latimer, 'Rambles in Scandinavia.'
1882. O. M. Stone, 'Norway in June.'
1884. W. L. MacFarlan, 'Behind the Scenes in Norway.'
1884. 'Tracks in Norway of Four Pairs of Feet.'
1884. R. A. Naylor, 'Letters on Sweden and Norway' (printed for private circulation).
1884. 'Pater', 'Children in Norway.'
1884. Lady Wilde (J. F. S.), 'Driftwood from Scandinavia.'
1885. R. Lovett, 'Norwegian Pictures.'
1885. C. Jurgenson, 'The Land of the Vikings.'
1885. 'One and a Half in Norway by Either or Both.'
1885. H. E. Scudder, 'An Excursion into Norway.'
1886. M. Paterson, 'Mountaineering.'
1886. E. Rhodes, 'Adventures of Five Spinsters in Norway.'
1886. C. W. Wood, 'Under Northern Skies.'
1887. Sir W. C. Leng, 'Land of the Midnight Sun' (Sheffield).
1887. S. M. H. Davis, 'Norwegian Nights.'
1887. W. B. MacTaggart, 'Notes on Norway.'
1888. 'A Jubilee Jaunt to Norway by Three Girls.'
1888. E. Kennard, 'Norwegian Sketches.'
1888. D. C. Kimball, 'Midnight Sunbeams.'
1890. G. T. Temple, 'Pleasure Cruises to the Land of the Midnight Sun.'
1890. J. M. Stuart, 'How "No. 1" became "1½" in Norway.'
1891. A. Ogilvie, 'A Visit to the Summer Home in the Saetersdal.'
1892. J. A. Froude, 'Norwegian Fjords' (in 'The Spanish Story of the Armada').
1892. C. F. Keary, 'Norway and the Norwegians.'
1893. W. S., 'West Norway Notes.'
1894. Mrs. Alec Tweedie, 'Winter Jaunts.'
1895. F. Sandiman, 'Angling Travels.'

- 1895. 'A Yachting Cruise to Norway by the Parson and the Lawyer.'
- 1896. A. Deir, 'A Man in the Fjords.'
- 1896. E. J. Goodman, 'New Ground in Norway.'
- 1896. A. F. Mockler-Ferryman, 'In the Northman's Land.'
- 1897. A. Chapman, 'Wild Norway.'
- 1898. E. C. Oppenheim, 'New Climbs in Norway.'
- 1899. J. A. Lees, 'Peaks and Pines.'

APPENDIX B

SOME ENGLISH NOVELS, ETC., DEALING WITH LIFE IN NORWAY

- 1826. Agnes Strickland, 'Arthur Ridley, or A Voyage to Norway' (in 'The Rival Crusoes').
- 1841. Harriet Martineau, 'Feats on the Fjord.'
- 1871. 'Oscar, A Tale of Norway.'
- 1871. Mrs. George Gladstone, 'Norwegian Stories' (R.T.S.).
- 1874. C. Eden, 'Twin-brothers of Elfvedale.'
- 1877. Catharine Ray, 'The Farm on the Fjord.'
- 1883. Mrs. Parr, 'A Northman's Story' (*Longman's Magazine*).
- 1885. John Fulford Vicary, 'An American in Norway' (London).
- 1885. W. E. Norris, 'Nils Jensen' (in 'A Man of his Word,' vol. ii).
- 1887. Marie Corelli, 'Thelma.'
- 1887. Edna Lyall, 'A Norwegian Sunday' (in the 'Temperance Society Jubilee Book').
- 1889. Edna Lyall, 'A Hardy Norseman.'

APPENDIX C

SOME ARTICLES IN ENGLISH PERIODICALS DEALING WITH ANCIENT SCANDINAVIAN SUBJECTS, 1820-1900

(Given from Poole's 'Index to Periodicals'.)

1820-1830	1831-1840	1841-1850	1851-1860
<p>1. 'Study of Ancient Scandinavian Literature,' <i>London Magazine</i>, 1820, vol. i, p. 391.</p> <p>2. 'Ancient Laws of Scandinavia,' <i>Edinburgh Review</i>, 1820, vol. ii, p. 176.</p> <p>3. 'The Eddas,' <i>Foreign Quarterly Review</i>, 1827, vol. ii, p. 210.</p> <p>4. 'Scandinavian Mythology,' <i>Foreign Review</i>, 1828, vol. i, p. 534.</p>	<p>1. 'Northern Runes,' <i>Foreign Quarterly Review</i>, 1831, vol. i, p. 438.</p> <p>2. 'History of Northmen,' <i>Westminster Review</i>, 1831, vol. ii, p. 442.</p> <p>3. 'History of Northmen,' <i>Monthly Review</i>, 1831, vol. ii, p. 1.</p> <p>4. 'Scandinavian Mythology,' <i>Blackwood's Magazine</i>, 1835, vol. ii, p. 25.</p>	<p>1. 'Heroic Ages of the North,' <i>Foreign Quarterly Review</i>, 1844, vol. i, p. 74.</p> <p>2. 'Laing's Heimskringla,' <i>Eclectic Review</i>, July 1884.</p> <p>3. 'Laing's Heimskringla' (Lord Neaves), <i>Edinburgh Review</i>, 1845, vol. ii, p. 267.</p> <p>4. 'Laing's Heimskringla,' <i>Westminster Review</i>, 1845, vol. ii, p. 358.</p>	<p>1. 'Northern Literature' (review of 'Anschaz, A Tale of the North,' by R. J. King), <i>Dublin Review</i>, 1850, vol. ii, p. 354.</p> <p>2. 'Early Norse Poetry' (review of 'Translations of the Breton Lays in the Middle of the Thirteenth Century,' edited by Keyser and Unger, Christiania, 1850), <i>Dublin Review</i>, September 1850.</p> <p>3. 'Northern Loves and Legends,' <i>People's Journal</i>, 1851, pp. 123, 186, 260.</p> <p>4. 'Northern Literature' (Speculum Regale), <i>Dublin Review</i>, March 1852, pp. 97-125.</p>

5. 'Teutonic and Scandinavian Romances,' *Penny Magazine*, 1836, Nos. 292, 294, 295, 296.
6. 'Northern History and Antiquities,' *Eclectic Review*, 1837, vol. i, p. 131.
5. 'Northmen,' *Howitt's Journal*, 1847, vol. ii, p. 163.
6. 'Scandinavian Mythology,' *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, 1848, p. 195.
5. 'Norwegians in Great Britain,' *Dublin Review*, 1852, vol. i, p. 184.
6. 'Norwegians in Ireland,' *Irish Quarterly Review*, 1852, p. 817.
7. 'Northmen in Britain,' *Fraser's Magazine*, 1852, vol. ii, p. 525.
8. 'Scandinavian Mythology,' *Westminster Review*, 1854, vol. ii, p. 311.
9. 'Northmen and Danes in Britain,' *London Quarterly Review*, 1885, vol. i, p. 216.
10. 'Scandinavia, Past and Present,' *Westminster Review*, 1856, vol. i, p. 387.
11. 'Old Heroes of Scandinavia,' *Household Words*, 1856, vol. i, p. 112.
12. 'Northmen in Cumberland and Westmoreland,' *New Quarterly Review*, 1856, p. 412.
13. 'Northmen in Cumberland,' *Dublin University Magazine*, 1856, vol. ii, p. 594.

APPENDIX C—continued

1861-1870	1871-1880	1881-1890	1891-1900
<p>1. 'Our Scandinavian Ancestors,' <i>Good Words</i>, 1860, p. 273.</p> <p>2. 'Heimskringla,' <i>Eclectic Review</i>, 1860, vol. ii, p. 631.</p> <p>3. 'Scandinavian Legends,' <i>Dublin University Magazine</i>, November 1863.</p> <p>4. 'Harald Haardraade and Magnus the Good' (by G. W. Dasent¹), <i>North British Review</i>, 1863, vol. ii, p. 493.</p> <p>5. 'Harald Haardraade,' etc. (by G. W. Dasent¹), <i>North British Review</i>, 1864, vol. i, p. 93.</p> <p>6. 'Norway and England in the Eleventh Century' (Dasent¹), <i>North British Review</i>, 1865, vol. i, p. 357.</p>	<p>1. 'Runic Stones of Knut the Great,' <i>Archæologia</i>, vol. xliii, 1871, p. 97.</p> <p>2. 'Old Norse Mythology,' <i>Dublin University Magazine</i>, 1872, vol. i, pp. 481, 599.</p> <p>3. 'Harald Haardraade,' <i>Quarterly Review</i>, 1873, vol. ii, p. 64.</p> <p>4. 'Scandinavians,' <i>Jewitt's Antiquary</i>, 1874, vol. i, p. 49.</p> <p>5. 'Early Kings of Norway' (Carlyle), <i>Fraser's Magazine</i>, 1875, vol. i, pp. 1, 135, 273.</p> <p>6. 'Early Kings of Norway,' <i>Edinburgh Review</i>, 1875, vol. ii, p. 203.</p>	<p>1. 'Norse Antiquarian Literature,' <i>Antiquary</i>, N.S., 1881, p. 64.</p> <p>2. 'Scandinavian "Thing" in Dublin,' <i>Antiquary</i>, N.S., 1882, vol. ii, p. 110.</p> <p>3. 'Norse in Normandy,' <i>British Quarterly Review</i>, 1883, vol. i, p. 98.</p> <p>4. 'Norse Poetry' (Corpus Poeticum Boreale), <i>Saturday Review</i>, 1883, vol. ii, p. 511.</p> <p>5. 'Norse Poetry' (Corpus Poeticum Boreale), <i>Academy</i>, 1883, vol. ii, p. 291.</p> <p>6. 'Norse Poetry' (Corpus Poeticum Boreale), <i>Spectator</i>, 1884, p. 747.</p>	<p>1. 'Scandinavian Antiquities,' <i>Edinburgh Review</i>, 1891, vol. i, p. 332.</p> <p>2. 'Old Scandinavian Myths,' <i>All the Year Round</i>, 1895, p. 130.</p> <p>3. 'Norse and Irish Literature,' <i>Contemporary Review</i>, 1895, vol. ii, pp. 575, 665.</p> <p>4. 'Phoenician Colonization in Scandinavia,' <i>Asiatic Quarterly Review</i>, 1895, vol. ii, p. 400.</p> <p>5. 'Scandinavian Literature' (The Saga Library), <i>Scottish Review</i>, October 1897.</p>

7. 'The Character of Old Northern Poetry,' *North British Review*, 1867, vol. i, p. 111.
 8. 'Buchanan's Scandinavian Ballad-Poetry,' *St. James's Magazine*, 1867, vol. i, p. 285.
 9. 'Stone Age in Scandinavia,' *Anthropol. Review*, 1868, p. 191.
 10. 'Heathen and Christian Northmen,' *Blackwood's Magazine*, 1869, vol. i, p. 323.
 11. 'Home-Life of Old Northmen,' *Dublin University Magazine*, 1869, vol. i, p. 465.
 12. 'Sea-Kings at Home,' *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, 1869, p. 254.
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7. 'Conquests of the Ynglings,' *Royal Hist. Soc. Transactions*, 1884, vol. xi, p. 309.
 8. 'Scandinavian Elements in the English Race,' *Antiquary*, N.S., 1886, vol. i, pp. 137, 205, 285; 1886, vol. ii, p. 137.
 9. 'Norsemen in the Isle of Man' (Vigfusson), *English Historical Review*, 1888, p. 498.

¹ Reprinted in Dasent's *Jest and Earnest*, vols. i and ii.

APPENDIX D IBSEN IN ENGLAND

ARTICLES, REVIEWS, CRITICAL ESSAYS	TRANSLATIONS	THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES
<p>1872. E. Gosse, 'Ibsen's Poems,' <i>Spectator</i>, March 16, 1872. E. Gosse, 'Peer Gynt,' <i>Spectator</i>, July 20, 1872. E. Gosse, 'The Pretenders,' <i>Academy</i>, 1872.</p> <p>1873. E. Gosse, 'H. Ibsen,' <i>Fortnightly Review</i>, 1873, vol. i. p. 74.</p>	<p>1872. J. A. Dahl translated 'Terje Vigen' in his book <i>Norwegian and Swedish Poems</i> (Bergen, 1872).</p> <p>1873. E. Gosse translated some of Ibsen's poems in <i>On Viol and Flute</i> (see also article in the <i>Fortnightly Review</i>).</p> <p>1876. A translation of 'Terje Vigen,' 'Catilina' (act i), and three short poems in <i>Translations from the Norse</i> (A. Johnstone) (privately printed at Gloucester).</p> <p>'Emperor and Galilean,' translated by Catherine Ray.</p>	<p>1880. <i>Quickands</i> (<i>Pillars of Society</i>), at the Gaiety Theatre (December 15), translated by W. Archer.</p>
<p>1879. E. Gosse, in 'Studies in the Literature of Northern Europe' (reprint of the article in the <i>Fortnightly Review</i>, 1873).</p> <p>1880. Notices of the performance of <i>Pillars of Society</i> at the Gaiety Theatre in the <i>Times</i>, the <i>Standard</i>, and the <i>Athenaeum</i> (December 25).</p>	<p>1880. <i>A Doll's House</i>, translated by T. Weber (Copenhagen).</p>	

1881. W. Archer, 'H. Ibsen,' *St. James's Magazine*, 1881, i, pp. 27, 104.
1883. W. Archer, 'H. Ibsen's Dramas,' *Academy*, 1883, i, p. 5.
'A Dramatist at Bay,' *Saturday Review*, 1883, i, p. 43.
- E. Gosse, 'Studies in the Literature of Northern Europe' (reprint).
1884. W. Archer, 'Breaking of a Butterfly,' *Theatre*, 1884, i, p. 209.
E. Aveling, 'Breaking of a Butterfly,' *To-day*, 1884, i, p. 473.
Athenaeum, March 8.
Academy, March 8.
Saturday Review, March 8.
1882. *Nora*, translated by Miss F. Lord (with an Introduction).
1885. *Ghosts*, translated by Miss Lord, in *To-day*, 1885, i, pp. 29, 65, 105.
Camelot Series (edited by Havelock Ellis) : *The Pillars of Society*, translated by W. Archer; *Ghosts*, translated by W. Archer; *An Enemy of the People*, translated by Mrs. E. Marx-Aveling, with an Introduction by Havelock Ellis.
1889. *A Doll's House*, translated by W. Archer.
Rosmersholm, translated by Louis N. Parker.
1889. Arthur Symonds, 'H. Ibsen,' *Universal Review*, April 1889.
E. Gosse, 'Ibsen's Social Dramas,' *Fortnightly Review*, January 1889.
1884. *Breaking of a Butterfly*—an adaptation of *A Doll's House* (by Messrs. H. A. Jones and Henry Hermann), at the Prince's Theatre (March 3).
1885. *Nora* (in Miss Lord's translation), acted by amateurs.
1889. *Nora*, in W. Archer's translation at the Novelty Theatre, June 7.
Pillars of Society, a single performance at the Opéra Comique Theatre, July 17.

APPENDIX D--continued

ARTICLES, REVIEWS, CRITICAL ESSAYS	TRANSLATIONS	THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES
<p>1889. P. H. Wicksteed, 'Peer Gynt,' <i>Contemporary Review</i>, 1889, ii, p. 274.</p> <p>R. K. Hervey, 'Pillars of Society,' <i>Theatre</i>, 1889, ii, p. 94.</p> <p>W. Archer, 'English Criticism of Ibsen,' <i>Fortnightly Review</i>, 1889, ii, p. 30.</p> <p>F. Wedmore, 'H. Ibsen,' <i>Academy</i>, 1889, i, p. 419.</p> <p>C. H. Herford, 'H. Ibsen,' <i>Academy</i>, 1889, i, p. 432.</p> <p>Clement Scott, 'A Doll's House,' <i>Theatre</i>, 1889, ii, p. 19.</p> <p>R. K. Hervey, 'Doll's House,' <i>Theatre</i>, 1889, ii, p. 38.</p> <p>R. F. Sharp, 'Ibsen—A Dramatic Experiment,' <i>Theatre</i>, 1889, i, p. 73.</p> <p>W. F. Lord, 'Works of Ibsen,' <i>Nineteenth Century</i>, August 1889.</p> <p>F. Wedmore, 'H. Ibsen,' <i>Academy</i>, July 27.</p> <p>'A Doll's House,' <i>Spectator</i>, 1889, i, p. 853.</p> <p>'A Doll's House,' <i>Saturday Review</i>, June 29.</p>		

1889. 'H. Ibsen's Men and Women,' *Westminster Review*, 1889, i, p. 626.
- W. Archer, 'The Dying Drama,' *New Review*, September 1889.
- Robert Buchanan and Justin McCarthy in *Daily Telegraph*, July 22, 23, 1889.
1890. C. H. Herford, 'H. Ibsen,' *Academy*, January 18.
- 'Ibsen's Plays,' *Saturday Review*, 1890, i, p. 15.
- 'Ibsen's Dramas in Prose,' *Saturday Review*, 1890, i, pp. 352, 474.
- W. Archer, 'Ibsen as he is Translated,' *Time*, January, 1890.
- Havelock Ellis, Essay on Ibsen in *The New Spirit*.
- E. Gosse, 'Northern Studies' (reprint, but his essay in the *Fortnightly Review*, 1889, added).
- H. Jaeger's 'Life of Ibsen,' translated by Clara Bell.
- Sir Walter Besant's sequel 'The Doll's House and After,' *English Illustrated Magazine*, January 1890.
- G. B. Shaw, 'Still After the Doll's House,' *Time*, February 1890.
1890. *The Lady from the Sea*, translated by Mrs. E. Marx-Aveling (Cameo Series), with an Introduction by E. Gosse.
- Nora*, a second revised edition of Miss Lord's translation, with an Introduction.
- Ghosts*, translated by Miss Lord, originally printed in *To-day*, 1885, with an Introduction.
- 1890-1. Prose Dramas of H. Ibsen. English edition by W. Archer (5 vols.).
- Vol. i.
The League of Youth, Pillars of Society, Doll's House, translated by W. Archer.
- Vol. ii.
Ghosts, translated by W. Archer.

APPENDIX D—continued

ARTICLES, REVIEWS, CRITICAL ESSAYS	TRANSLATIONS	THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES
	<p>1890-1. Prose Dramas, vol. ii (<i>cont.</i>) : <i>Enemy of the People</i>, translated by E. Marx-Aveling. <i>Wild Duck</i>, translated by Mrs. F. E. Archer.</p> <p>Vol. iii. <i>Inger</i>, translated by C. Archer. <i>The Vikings</i>, translated by W. Archer. <i>The Pretenders</i>, translated by W. Archer.</p> <p>Vol. iv. <i>Emperor and Galilean</i>, translated by W. Archer.</p> <p>Vol. v. <i>Rosmersholm</i>, translated by Charles Archer. <i>Lady from the Sea</i>, translated by Mrs. F. E. Archer. <i>Hedda Gabler</i>, translated by W. Archer.</p> <p>Prose Dramas of H. Ibsen. Lovell's Series of Foreign Literature (New York and London, 3 vols.).</p> <p>Vol. i. <i>Doll's House, Pillars of Society, Ghosts</i>, translated by W. Archer.</p>	

- 1890-1. *Rosmersholm*, translated by M. Carmichael.
Vol. ii.
Lady from the Sea, translated by Clara Bell.
Enemy of Society, translated by W. Archer.
Wild Duck, translated by Mrs. Marx-Aveling.
The Young Men's League, translated by Henry Carstarphen.
Vol. iii.
Hedda Gabler, translated by W. Archer, with an introduction by E. Gosse.
1891. *Hedda Gabler*, translated by E. Gosse (four different editions). Preface by E. Gosse to the limited edition).
Hedda Gabler, translated by W. Archer (reprint, shilling edition).
Brand, translated into prose by W. Wilson, with a Preface.
Rosmersholm, translated by C. Archer (reprint), Prefatory Note by W. Archer.
Prose translations of some of Ibsen's poems in P. H. Wicksteed's article in *Contemporary Review*, 1891, vol. ii, p. 333.
1891. E. Gosse, 'Hedda Gabler,' *Fortnightly Review*, January.
O. Crawford, 'H. I.,' *Fortnightly Review*, 1891, i, p. 725.
'H. Ibsen,' *Temple Bar*, 1891, iii, p. 97.
H. A. Kennedy, 'The Drama of the Moment,' *Nineteenth Century*, 1891, ii, p. 258.
C. H. Herford, 'Brand,' *Contemporary Review*, 1891, i, p. 407.
R. A. Armstrong, 'Brand,' *Westminster Review*, 1891, i, p. 409.
'Brand,' *Saturday Review*, 1891, ii, p. 705.
'Ghosts,' *Theatre*, 1891, i, p. 205.
'Hedda Gabler,' *Saturday Review*, 1891, i, pp. 145, 498.
1891. *Ibsen's Ghost* (a burlesque), by James Matthew Barrie, performed at Toole's Theatre, May 30.
Rosmersholm, at the Vaudeville Theatre, February 23.
Ghosts (a single performance), at the Royalty Theatre, Soho, March 13.
Hedda Gabler, at the Vaudeville Theatre, produced by Miss E. Robins and Miss Marion Lea, April 20.
Lady from the Sea, at Terry's Theatre, May 11.

APPENDIX D—continued

ARTICLES, REVIEWS, CRITICAL ESSAYS	TRANSLATIONS	THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES
<p>1891. 'Hedda Gabler,' <i>Theatre</i>, 1891, i, 257. Henry James, 'Hedda Gabler,' <i>New Review</i>, 1891, i, p. 519. 'Ibsen's Ghost' (a burlesque), <i>Theatre</i>, 1891, ii, p. 28. 'Lady from the Sea,' <i>Theatre</i>, 1891, i, p. 306. P. H. Wicksteed, 'Poems of Ibsen,' <i>Contemporary Review</i>, 1891, ii, p. 333. 'Rosmersholm,' <i>Saturday Review</i>, 1891, i, p. 258. 'Rosmersholm,' <i>Theatre</i>, 1891, i, p. 196. 'Ibsen's Social Dramas,' <i>Quarterly Review</i>, 1891, i, p. 305. W. Archer, 'Quintessence of Ibsenism,' <i>New Review</i>, 1891, ii, p. 463. 'Shaw on Ibsen,' <i>Saturday Review</i>, 1891, ii, p. 455. C. E. Maurice, 'H. Ibsen,' <i>Economic Review</i>, 1891, p. 348. W. Archer, 'Ghost Giberings,' <i>Pall Mall Gazette</i>, April 8. G. B. Shaw, 'Quintessence of Ibsenism.'</p>		

1891. George Moore in *Impressions and Opinions*.
Austin Fryers, 'Rosmer of Rosmersholm,' suggested by H. Ibsen's *Rosmersholm*.
1892. Herford, 'Ibsen,' *Academy*, 1892, i, p. 247.
'Peer Gynt,' *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1892, ii, p. 533.
'Peer Gynt,' *Saturday Review*, 1892, ii, p. 417.
'Beerbohm Tree on Ibsen,' *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1892, i, p. 103.
'Ibsenism,' 1892, *London Quarterly Review*, i, p. 227.
P. H. Wicksteed, Four Lectures on Ibsen.
W. L. Courtney in 'Studies at Leisure' (reprint from an article in *Quarterly Review*, 1891, i, p. 305).
Arthur B. Walkley in 'Playhouse Impressions,'
Mrs. Tweedie, 'Ibsen and Björnson,' *Temple Bar*, 1893, ii, p. 536.
L. Simons, 'Ibsen as an Artist,' *Westminster Review*, 1893, ii, p. 506.
'Masterbuilder,' *Saturday Review*, 1893, i, p. 241.
'Masterbuilder,' *Spectator*, 1893, i, p. 285.
W. Archer, 'Mausoleum of Ibsen,' *Fortnightly Review*, 1893, ii, p. 77.
1892. Popular edition of W. Archer's translation of *A Doll's House*.
New edition of Miss Lord's translation of *Nora*.
Peer Gynt, translated by W. and C. Archer.
1893. *Masterbuilder*, translated by E. Gosse and W. Archer.
(A new edition of the same with Bibliographical Notes, etc.)
Reprint of Miss Lord's translation of *Nora*.
1892. *A Doll's House*, at the Avenue Theatre, April 19.
(April 19, at the Globe, *Beata*, an adaptation of Austin Fryers' *Rosmer of Rosmersholm*, 1891.)
(June 28, a parody, *A Ghost*, a spirited sketch, not by Ibsen, at the Criterion.)
1893. *Ghosts*, at the Independent Theatre, January 27.
Masterbuilder, at the Trafalgar Square Theatre, February 20.
Masterbuilder, at the Vandeville Theatre, March 6.
Hedda Gabler, *Rosmersholm*, *The Masterbuilder*, an act from *Brand*, at the Opéra Comique, May 29-June 10.

APPENDIX D—continued

ARTICLES, REVIEWS, CRITICAL ESSAYS	TRANSLATIONS	THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES
<p>1893. Henry James in <i>Essays in London and Elsewhere</i>. William Watson in <i>Excursions in Criticism</i>. F. Anstey, <i>Mr. Punch's Pocket Ibsen</i>.</p>		<p>1893. <i>An Enemy of the People</i>, at the Haymarket (Herbert Beerbohm Tree), June 14. <i>The Lady from the Sea</i> (produced by Mrs. and Mr. Charrington).</p>
<p>1894. 'Ibsen and the Morbid Taint,' <i>Belgravia</i>, 1894, i, p. 59. B. Johnson, 'Books about Ibsen,' <i>Academy</i>, 1894, i, p. 285. 'Boyesen on Ibsen,' <i>Spectator</i>, 1894, i, p. 625. 'Boyesen on Ibsen,' <i>Saturday Review</i>, 1894, ii, p. 359. H. Waring, 'Ibsen in London,' <i>Theatre</i>, 1894, ii, p. 164. Sir Edward Russell, 'Ibsen,' a lecture. Mary S. Gilliland, 'Ibsen's Women,' a lecture. Allan Monkhouse in <i>Books and Plays</i> (limited to 400 copies). H. H. Boyesen, <i>A Commentary on the Works of H. Ibsen</i> (Heinemann).</p>	<p>1894. <i>Brand</i>, translated into original metres by C. H. Herford, with an Introduction. <i>Brand</i>, translated into English verse by F. E. Garrett. Second edition of W. Wilson's prose translation of <i>Brand</i>.</p>	<p>1894. <i>An Enemy of the People</i>, in Manchester, January 27. <i>The Wild Duck</i>, at the Royalty Theatre, May 4. <i>Hedda Gabler</i> and <i>The Master-builder</i>, in Manchester and other cities.</p>
<p>1895. (Max Nordau's <i>Degeneration</i>, translated into English.) E. J. Goodman, 'Ibsen at Christianity,' <i>Theatre</i>, 1895, ii, p. 146. W. L. Courtney, 'Note on Little Eyolf,' <i>Fortnightly Review</i>, [1895, i, p. 277.</p>	<p>1895. <i>Little Eyolf</i>, translated by W. Archer. <i>The Master-builder</i>, translated by E. Gosse and W. Archer, with Bibliographical Notes (limited edition).</p>	

1895. Steevens, 'The New Ibsen,' *New Review*, 1895, i, p. 39.
New edition of F. Anstey's *Mr. Punch's Pocket Ibsen*.
Regeneration—a reply to Max Nordau.
1896. G. B. Shaw, *The Sanity of Art*.
A. T. Quiller-Couch in *Adventures in Criticism*.
'John Gabriel Borkman,' *Saturday Review*, 1896, ii, p. 654.
'Little Eyolf,' *Academy*, 1896, ii, p. 465.
G. B. Shaw, 'Little Eyolf,' *Saturday Review*, 1896, ii, pp. 563, 623.
Shaw, 'Peer Gynt,' *Saturday Review*, 1896, ii, p. 542.
Adams, 'Sarcey on Ibsen,' *Theatre*, 1896, ii, p. 19.
Shaw, 'John Gabriel Borkman,' *Saturday Review*, 1897, i, p. 114.
Shaw, 'Doll's House played in 1897,' *Saturday Review*, 1897, i, p. 539.
Shaw, 'John Gabriel Borkman in London,' *Saturday Review*, 1897, i, p. 507.
Shaw, 'Ghosts at the Jubilee,' *Saturday Review*, 1897, ii, p. 12.
A. S. Spender, 'Little Eyolf—A Plea for Reticence,' *Dublin Review*, 1897, i, p. 122.
Traill and McNeill, 'Ibsenism,' *National Review*, 1897, i, p. 641.
1896. A reprint of Archer's translation of *Peer Gynt*.
1896. *Little Eyolf*, at the Avenue Theatre, London, November 23.
1897. *John Gabriel Borkman*, translated by W. Archer. Popular edition of the same. *Gleanings from Ibsen*—selected and edited by E. A. Keddell and P. C. Standing, with a Preface on Ibsenism. *A Doll's House*, *Ghosts*, *Lady from the Sea*, *The Wild Duck*, Scott's's shilling edition (each play one vol.).
Little Eyolf, new edition.
1897. *John Gabriel Borkman*, at the Strand, May 3.
The Wild Duck, repeated at the Globe, May.
Ghosts, at the Independent Theatre, June 24.

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ARTICLES, REVIEWS, CRITICAL ESSAYS	TRANSLATIONS	THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES
1897. Sir Edward Russell and P. C. Standing, <i>Ibsen on his Merits</i> (parts of it a revision of Sir Edward Russell's lecture on Ibsen, 1894).		
1898. 'Brandes on Ibsen,' <i>Saturday Review</i> , 1898, i, p. 821. 'Ibsen's Seventieth Birthday,' <i>Academy</i> , 1898, i, p. 352. Shaw, 'England's Compliment to Ibsen,' <i>Saturday Review</i> , 1898, i, p. 428. Walter Jerrold, 'Henrik Ibsen,' in <i>Prophets of the Century</i> —Essays, edited by Arthur Rickett.	1898. Reprint of Mrs. Marx-Aveling's translation of <i>An Enemy of the People</i> (shilling edition). <i>Hedda Gabler</i> , translated by E. Gosse (new edition).	
1899. 'H. Ibsen,' <i>Academy</i> , 1899, ii, p. 79. Stobart, 'New Light on Brand,' <i>Fortnightly Review</i> , 1899, ii, p. 227. Max Beerbohm, 'Brandes on Ibsen,' <i>Saturday Review</i> , 1899, ii, p. 101. Georg Brandes, <i>H. Ibsen and B. Björnson</i> , translated into English by Jessie Muir, introduced by W. Archer.	1899. New edition of Prof. Herford's translation of <i>Brand</i> . Second reprint of <i>Peer Gynt</i> , translated by W. and C. Archer.	
1900. 'Love's Comedy,' <i>Academy</i> , 1900, i, p. 527. C. H. Herford, 'Scene from Love's Comedy,' <i>Fortnightly Review</i> , 1900, i, p. 191.	1900. <i>Love's Comedy</i> , translated by C. H. Herford, with an Introduction. <i>When we Dead Awaken</i> , translated by W. Archer.	

1900. Joyce, 'When we Dead Awaken,' *Fortnightly Review*, 1900, i, p. 575.
 'When we Dead Awaken,' *Academy*, 1900, i, p. 307.
 W. L. Courtney, *The Idea of Tragedy in Ancient and Modern Drama*.
1901. Beerbohm, 'Pillars of Society,' *Saturday Review*, 1901, i, p. 631.
 'Ibsen's Plays in England, 1901,' *Academy*, i, p. 244.
 W. J. Clarke Miller, *H. Ibsen, a Dramatic Pioneer*.
- 1900-1. New revised edition of *Prose Dramas of Henrik Ibsen*, edited by W. Archer: *The League of Youth, Pillars of Society, A Doll's House, Ghosts, An Enemy of the People* (each play introduced by W. Archer).
1901. Third impression of Prof. Herford's translation of *Brand*.
 New edition of *The Master-builder*, translated by E. Gosse and W. Archer.
1902. Stratfield, *Lyrical Poems by Ibsen*, selected and translated.
An Enemy of the People, translated by W. Archer, with an Introduction.
 Third reprint of W. Archer's translation of *Peer Gynt*.
1900. A. M. Butler, 'A View of Ibsen,' *Contemporary Review*, 1902, i, p. 709.
1903. Beerbohm, 'Vikings at Helgeland,' *Saturday Review*, 1903, i, p. 517.
 Beerbohm, 'When we Dead Awaken,' *Saturday Review*, 1903, i, p. 168.
1901. *Pillars of Society*, at the Strand, May.
1902. *Lady from the Sea*, at the Royalty Theatre, London, May 5.
1903. *Vikings at Helgeland*, at the Imperial Theatre, London (Miss Ellen Terry), April 15.

APPENDIX D—continued

ARTICLES, REVIEWS, CRITICAL ESSAYS	TRANSLATIONS	THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES
1904. 'Scene from Peer Gynt,' <i>Independent Review</i> , 1904, ii, p. 444. W. Archer, 'Apprenticeship of Ibsen,' <i>Fortnightly Review</i> , 1904, i, p. 25. New edition of Shaw's <i>Quintessence of Ibsenism</i> , enlarged edition.	1904. New edition of Prose Dramas of Ibsen.	
1905. Archer, 'Ibsen in his Letters,' <i>Fortnightly Review</i> , 1905, ii, p. 428.	1905. <i>Correspondence of H. Ibsen</i> , translated by Mary Morison. New edition of <i>The Wild Duck</i> , translated by W. Archer, with an Introduction. New edition of Ibsen's Prose Dramas.	1905. <i>The Wild Duck</i> , at the Court Theatre (Mr. Granville Barker as Hjalmar Ekdal), October. <i>An Enemy of the People</i> , at His Majesty's Theatre (Beerbohm Tree), November 2.
1906. Jones, 'Ibsen, Satirist and Poet,' <i>Quarterly Review</i> , 1906, i, p. 71. Archer, 'Craftsmanship of Ibsen,' <i>Fortnightly Review</i> , 1906, ii, p. 101. Archer, 'Ibsen as I Knew Him,' <i>Monthly Review</i> , 1906, ii, p. 1. E. Dowden, 'Ibsen,' <i>Contemporary Review</i> , 1906, ii, p. 652. A. Symonds, 'Ibsen,' <i>Quarterly Review</i> , 1906, ii, p. 375. Max Beerbohm, 'Ibsen,' <i>Saturday Review</i> , 1906, i, p. 650. 'Ibsen,' <i>Spectator</i> , 1906, i, p. 822. 'Ibsen,' <i>Academy</i> , 1906, i, p. 501. 'Ibsen,' <i>Athenaeum</i> , 1906, i, p. 647. E. G. Craig, A Note on <i>Rosmersholm</i> .	1906. <i>The Lady from the Sea</i> , translated by W. Archer (new edition), with an Introduction. <i>Rosmersholm</i> , translated by C. and W. Archer (new edition), introduced by W. Archer. New edition of Ibsen's Prose Dramas. <i>Hedda Gabler</i> , translated by E. Gosse (new edition). Fourth reprint of <i>Peer Gynt</i> , translated by W. Archer. Second edition of <i>When we Dead Awaken</i> , translated by W. Archer.	1906. <i>Lady Inger</i> , at the Scala Theatre, London, January 28, 29.

1906. *Iconoclasts: A Book of Dramatists*, by James Huneker.
1907. Jane H. Findlater, 'Ibsen, the Reformer,' *National Review*, 1907, i, p. 482.
 Haldane Macfall, *Ibsen, the Man, his Art and Significance*.
 Edmund Gosse, *H. Ibsen*.
 Jeanette Lee, *The Ibsen Secret*.
 A Key to his Dramas.
 (D. Merezhkovsky, *H. Ibsen*, translated into English.)
1910. P. H. Grumann, *Ibsen's Symbolism in 'The Masterbuilder'* and '*When we Dead Awaken*.'
1911. Ashley Dukes's *Modern Dramatists*.
1912. R. Ellis Roberts, *H. Ibsen*.
1913. G. B. Shaw, *Quintessence of Ibsenism* (reprint).
 Henry Rose, *Henrik Ibsen, Poet, Mystic, and Moralist*.
- 1906-8. The Collected Works of Henrik Ibsen, edited and revised by W. Archer (11 vols.).
1909. *The Phantasy of Peer Gynt*: Selections done into English Verse, by J. M. Pagan.
1912. F. E. Garrett, *Lyrics and Poems from Ibsen and Brand*, with an introduction by P. H. Wicksteed.
Peer Gynt, a new translation by R. Ellis Roberts.
1913. *The Pretenders*, translated by W. Archer.
1907. *Hedda Gabler*, at the Court Theatre, London (Mrs. Patrick Campbell), March.

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